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The Future of the Labour Party

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WATCHING the process of Cabinet making Disraeli remarked that "the cake was too small." Certainly Mr. MacDonald, who has at the same time to satisfy the disproportionate claims of three parties and also to keep his Government "national," must wish there were more slices to go round. He will probably be grateful if more of our elder statesmen follow Sir Austen Chamberlain's lead and decide that it is time to give way to younger men. The only thing to complain of in this really admirable display of modesty and magnanimity is that Sir Austen's letter was addressed to Mr. Baldwin and not to Mr. MacDonald. If, as the *Times* insists each day, the Prime Minister really has a free hand in making his Cabinet, it was surely tactless, to say the least of it, for Sir Austen to write to his party leader of the difficulties that confront "the Prime Minister and yourself" in "the allocation of offices." Of course Mr. MacDonald must in practice be largely dependent upon Mr. Baldwin's advice as far as Conservative members are concerned, but the decencies of "National Government" cannot be preserved if leading Conservatives publicly assume that the appointment and allocation of offices are at Mr. Baldwin's disposal.

* * *

There are two other odd features in this Cabinet-making. The first is the assumption that if there is to be a strong Protectionist like Mr. Neville Chamberlain at the Exchequer there should be a wobbly Free-Trader like Mr. Runciman at the Board of Trade. But a Government, even a National one, must have some policy—it is not a balance of power or a cricket team, which needs a slow bowler for one end and a fast for the other. If we are to get tariffs, we would prefer them to be constructed by people who believe in them. More odd still is the announcement that Mr. Snowden is after all to remain in office. Does this mean that he too is wobbly about tariffs? His reply to Mr. Chamberlain during the election certainly suggested that he had abandoned his fanatical adherence to Free Trade. If so, one wishes he had done so earlier, when we were still on gold and there was a really strong case for Protection. Or is the explanation, as some have suggested, that he is really as certain as ever that all tariffs are wicked, and so intends to remain in office in order to stultify the only positive policy of this Government as he stultified the policy of the last Government? We should not like to hazard any guess except that he takes office in the new Ministry

rather of his own volition than by the desire of his new Conservative friends.

* * *

Hopes of an eleventh-hour repentance on the part of the Japanese are becoming fainter. They show no sign of relaxing their hold on Manchuria. Indeed, they appear to be tightening it, on one pretext or another—the activities of Chinese bandits, the tactics of General Ma, the "Red menace." We frankly do not believe in these excuses. Japan has grievances and she has rights in Manchuria; but violence and intrigue are not proper methods of remedying grievances or defending rights. The attitude of Nanking is not only correct; it shows a willingness to stretch points for the sake of peace. The League has been invited to attach neutral representatives to the Chinese who would be responsible for the taking over of the evacuated territory and the protection of Japanese nationals. And we believe that even the presence of neutral troops would not be objected to. If in face of all this Japan persists in her policy of defiance and aggression, the Powers will have willy-nilly to decide between abandoning China and the Covenant and the Kellogg Pact and coercing the peace-breaker. If Great Britain and the United States were resolute, it is probable that the danger of extreme measures could be avoided. But, unfortunately, the United States is irresolute—or so it is generally believed—and it may fall to the lot of this country to take the lead in upholding the cause of international justice and decency.

* * *

There has been much speculation whether Mr. Henderson, after his downfall last week, will preside over the Disarmament Conference in February. For ourselves, we hope that he will, and we are glad to see that the *Times* takes the same view. His personal fitness for the position is no more in question now than it was when the League Council chose him for it, and the fact that he can now be free to devote himself to the business, for the several months that it may be expected to last, is an additional argument in his favour. But behind this personal question there looms a larger doubt. What is to be hoped from the Disarmament Conference? At the moment the omens are not good. The general insecurity on the Continent, the policy of France, the imbroglio in the Far East are highly discouraging. Some little encouragement may perhaps be got from the replies of the various States (including Great Britain) to the League regarding an "armaments truce" for the next twelve months. Their acceptance of the principle in general, despite the reservations with which it is hedged, may help to inspire confidence—or at least to check exaggerated fears. But our hopes of an all-round reduction of armaments will be stronger when we see a move for an all-round reduction of the debts and reparations and tariff walls which are setting the world by the ears.

* * *

The Select Committee's Report on Closer Union in East Africa is a wholesome document. It will bitterly disappoint the Delamere party in Kenya. But it is well to remember that there are many less vocal settlers who have never approved of Lord Delamere's attitude. The extreme settler case was very much damaged by the evidence of its own representatives before the Committee and even more by the evidence of the native witnesses. There is no doubt at all about the great impression produced on the Committee by these native witnesses. The result can be read in the Committee's recommendations. There is to be no closer union. The Kenya legislature is to remain an advisory body, which incidentally provides the majority of the Committee with a good excuse for again shelving the problem of the "common roll" for Indians. There is to be an increase of native representation. That controversial word "paramountcy" is defined as meaning that "the interests of the overwhelming majority of the indigenous population should not be subordinated to those of a minority belonging to another race, however important in itself." No further alienation of Crown lands to non-natives is to take place pending a further inquiry into the needs of the natives, and the status of the Chief Native Commissioner is to be so improved that he may, if he will, be a really effective guardian of native rights.

* * *

The Round Table Conference still drags wearily on, but the continual delays and adjournments, which might have had some value when private negotiations were being carried on, are now having a very demoralising effect. No advance can be made with the communal question until the Government has made some declaration on general policy, and discussions have now ceased. The Federal Structure Committee has done some useful work with regard to the formation of a Supreme Court and financial arrangements between the central Government and the Provinces and States. There must, however, be an air of unreality about the proceedings as long as the main questions of the transfer of responsibility and financial control remain untouched. Nor has there yet been any discussion about such delicate questions as the prevention of discrimination against European business. The Indian delegates naturally feel it absurd to be discussing minor points, like the salary of judges of the Federal Court, when the prospects of the Federal Government coming into existence are so extremely nebulous. At present the proceedings stand adjourned until the Prime Minister chooses to call the Minorities Committee, and it would seem as if a whole week is to be wasted while the newly formed Cabinet tries to evolve an Indian policy. India will be the first serious test of the extent to which Mr. MacDonald can control the reactionaries with whom he has cast his lot.

* * *

After the events of last week, the severe defeat of the Labour Party at this week's municipal elections came as no surprise. Almost everywhere seats were lost, except in Scotland where there was a small net gain; and, as in the General Election, the losses were heaviest in the larger industrial towns. London, which, unlike the provinces, re-elects its metropolitan borough councils *en bloc* every three years, showed the most spectacular defeats of Labour; in several boroughs the Labour representation was completely wiped out. In local, as in national, affairs the partisans of "economy" look like having matters all their own way for the next few years. It is deplorable that the local authorities,

which might have stood in the way of panic measures, should have—or regard themselves as having—a mandate to out-Herod Herod in retrenching on good and bad expenditure alike. Formidable announcements of cuts have already been made by a number of councils, and these will certainly be followed by more. Road schemes and the building or re-equipping of schools and hospitals are being abandoned or suspended, with the object of saving public money. It is a lunatic form of saving—whether from the point of view of the national welfare or from that of increasing employment.

* * *

There were confident prophecies last week that this week's unemployment figures would show a substantial improvement; but the actual returns are rather disappointing. There has been a fall of nearly 12,000 on the week in the total number unemployed; but once again the entire improvement is accounted for by the taking back into their jobs of workers who had been temporarily stopped, and there has been a further increase in total unemployment. The improvement is entirely in the North and Midlands, and especially in the textile and motor trades. In the South unemployment is worse, mainly on account of the suspension of building operations. The changes both for better and for worse are still small, and show no sign as yet of any really powerful stimulus to exports from the devaluation of sterling. Indeed, in the heavy trades there is no improvement at all, though something must be allowed for the prevention of a further decline, especially at this time of year. It is to be feared, however, that the returns of the past few weeks show that the demand for exports, particularly in the heavy trades, is at present seriously inelastic. What else, indeed, can it be as long as the world depression lasts? The fall in sterling may enable us to re-capture a little trade from our competitors; but no substantial recovery can be looked for except as part of a general world revival. Of that there is still no sign at all—nor is there likely to be for some time to come.

* * *

The importance of the Kylsant case lies not in the question of intent to defraud, nor in the precise significance attached by accountants to certain technical terms, but in the startling revelation of the inadequacy of the safeguards prescribed for the investing public. The privilege of limited liability was designed originally to encourage the taking of legitimate risks by the genuine entrepreneur. It has led to an almost complete divorce of the control of capital from ownership. Company law has become a screen behind which the savings of the middle classes become "masses of manœuvre," exploited, by those who have sufficient confidence, with varying degrees of skill and success. In such circumstances it is essential that the investor should at least have full information about the operations in which he is taking part. It is no answer to say that he is not obliged to invest; for an investment made in full knowledge of existing facts may be subsequently sacrificed in some quite unforeseen manœuvre. The Kylsant case should reawaken interest in the proposals for a more thorough-going publicity of accounts which are embodied in the Liberal Yellow Book.

We have received the following analysis of the new Parliament from Professor H. J. Laski:

A great Conservative victory always means a great change in the character of the House of Commons. In the tables that follow, an attempt has been made to classify the new Parliament in terms of the outstanding characteristics it displays. Complete materials are not easily available as yet, and there is therefore a possibility that they need minor adjustments in order to understand the terms used. It should be said that an aristocrat is here defined as either the holder of an hereditary title or the son or wife of such a person. By "rentier" is meant a person who lives on inherited wealth and follows no occupation.

The composition of the whole House is as follows:—

TABLE I.

Members' Vocations.	Number.
Rentiers	165
Business Men	111
Lawyers	136
Accountants	8
Soldiers and Sailors	43
Farmer-Landowners	15
Teachers	11
Bankers and Financiers	47
Doctors	14
Retired Civil Servants	5
Journalists	15
Brewers	5
Trade Unionists	32
Others	8
	615

These results are grouped by parties in Table II.

TABLE II.

Members' Vocations.	Tory.	Liberal (Samuel)	Liberal (Simon).	MacD. Labour.	Labour.
Rentiers	150	9	1	3	2
Business Men	73	6	17	1	3
Lawyers	111	10	9	4	3
Accountants	6	—	2	—	—
Soldiers and Sailors	42	—	—	—	—
Farmer-Landowners	14	—	—	1	—
Teachers	5	2	—	—	4
Bankers and Financiers	44	1	1	1	—
Doctors	9	1	1	1	2
Retired Civil Servants	5	—	—	—	—
Journalists	8	3	3	1	—
Brewers	5	—	—	—	—
Trade Unionists	—	—	—	—	32
Others	—	1	—	1	6
	472	33	34	13	52

Ten independents, of various leanings, are excluded from this table.

The new House contains seventy aristocrats, of whom thirty-one are heirs to peerages; of these all save one are in the Tory Party. Seventy-nine members of the House sit for constituencies with which they have local associations; and 106 members have had experience, more or less extended, of work in local government. 378 members have sat in a previous Parliament. Outside the Labour Party, one member of the House—a Tory—was at one time a manual worker. On the Labour side the miners, with 24 representatives, contribute the only solid block of Trade Unionists.

From the materials at present available it is difficult to discover the educational affiliations of members; the figures that follow are, therefore, probably minimal. There are 56 Oxford and 27 Cambridge men. Eton has 40 and Harrow 18 members; while there are 39 other members who went to the various well-known public schools.

Among the present members of the House, 46 Tories have held ministerial office in previous governments. The respective numbers in the Liberal and Labour parties are 13 and 10.

THE FUTURE OF THE LABOUR PARTY

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S offer to co-operate with Labour may not be of much practical importance at the moment. Even when we add Mr. Lloyd George and his family to Labour's fighting strength, the National Government is likely, for some time to come, to be more embarrassed by its own true blue adherents than by anything that the Opposition can do. But Mr. Lloyd George's attitude does raise a fundamental question for the Labour Party. Everyone knows that Labour's defeat at this election was not only the fault of its enemies. If the Labour Government had appealed to the country in the early summer while it was still united, and before any panic had arisen, it would certainly have been severely defeated. Its record, except in foreign affairs, was feeble. A variety of reasons may be given—reasons of organisation, of personnel and of circumstance. But the one which is particularly in the minds of thinking people just now, and which has been ably stated in our correspondence columns, is this. Has there not been a fundamental confusion in Labour policy? Has the Labour Party made up its mind whether it is a vaguely revolutionary party intent on "smashing capitalism," or whether it is a reformist party willing to find any support it can for promoting greater equality and an improved organisation of society?

Some such confusion has certainly existed and it is essential that it should be cleared up. But before that is possible there are several questions of fact and definition which must be agreed upon. In the first place Labour is, like all parties, a "class party." That is to say that its basis must rest on the Trade Unions and working classes, just as the basis of Conservatism and Liberalism, in the days when they were clearly divided, rested on the division between the landed aristocracy and gentry on the one side and the industrialists and shop-keepers on the other. When the working classes had obtained the franchise and built up their own party, the differences between Tories and Liberals became less important than their joint fear of Labour—which is the root explanation of our present political situation. But to say that the Labour Party, like other parties, has a class basis, is not, of course, to say that it does not need and will not obtain the adherence of many people who do not come from the working classes. It has obtained their support and may, if it learns the lessons of disaster, obtain it to a far greater extent in the future.

In the second place, what does all this talk about "smashing capitalism" mean? The only thing it could mean to an intelligent Socialist is the substitution of public control for private enterprise and the transformation of the present social disorder into a decent society in which men and women can live on terms of equality. The "class-struggle" is not a mischievous invention: it is a deplorable fact. The object of the Socialist is to end it as peaceably as possible. But to have any chance of success the Labour Party must be both clear about its philosophy and realistic about its immediate policy. Recently it has been neither the one nor the other.

Take an example which explains incidentally much of the feebleness of the last Labour Government. When Mr. MacDonald was asked to form a Ministry in 1929 there were two intelligible courses open to him. Even if he had wished, it was impossible for him, in a minority position, and with the House of Lords as a permanent obstruction, to carry through a full programme of Socialism. One course was to refuse office and declare that Labour must wait until it won a clear majority. The alternative was to co-operate frankly with the Liberal Party upon constructive measures which were common ground between Labour and Liberal and to pursue them until the House of Lords provided the best of all possible reasons for an election and the return of the Labour Party. This is not what Mr. MacDonald did. With regard to unemployment, for instance, both the Labour and Liberal parties had advocated the policy of a development loan. Mr. Lloyd George, who was the pre-eminent sponsor of this policy, should have been made in part responsible for carrying it out. He would not have cured unemployment, but he would certainly have made a very much better show than Mr. Thomas. Nor need Labour have lost anything of its integrity, independence or prestige by such co-operation. In all probability it would have absorbed those Liberals who could ever be anything but a source of weakness to Labour, and the division of English parties would then have become real and honest. In practice the policy of the Labour Government was actually less advanced than that advocated by the official Liberal Party. When, for instance, the Government introduced a Coal Mines Bill it not only did not offer to nationalise the mines, it did not even nationalise mining royalties, though that had for many years been an accepted item of Liberal policy.

This is the kind of confusion which the Labour Party must avoid in the future. The lessons of the last two years should be clear enough. The first is that no considerable further advance can be made along the lines of eleemosynary legislation. No Socialist voter should be deceived into thinking that any Government can indefinitely tax the rich and give to the poor. In the second place, it is time for the Labour Party to cease the absurd habit of combining vague denunciations of capitalism on the one hand, with reassurances on the other that Socialism is really entirely harmless to everybody and everything. The next thing for the Labour Party to do is to decide what key items of Socialist policy could really be carried out by a resolute Socialist Government, with a majority behind it, and having so decided, to work them out in practical detail with the help of experts. If it adopts such a policy, it will no longer be necessary to discuss whether co-operation with Liberals is necessary or desirable, because those Liberals who are ever really likely to co-operate will then be presented with a workmanlike policy which they can judge on its merits. There are to-day thousands of people all over the country who voted "National," not because they are necessarily anti-Socialist, but because they could not stomach a vague Socialism which they did not themselves understand and which they shrewdly suspected few of the Labour leaders clearly understood themselves. Labour

needs, not a new omnibus edition of *Labour and the Nation*, but a specific programme which can be explained —and there will be some years for education—to men and women whose panic was due to ignorance, but whose distrust of the late Labour Government's capacity to carry out its policy had some real foundation.

POST OFFICE REFORM

A MAN who has had the experience of administering the Post Office for a very short period naturally feels regret when he has to leave office before the plans on which he was working have had time to mature. He appreciates the efficiency of the great machine, the ability and devotion of the administrators, and the loyalty and *esprit de corps* of the immense staff of postal workers. He realises how groundless are many of the complaints made against the department and is loath to range himself with the critics. On the other hand, if he is to serve the community to the full he must not be deterred by mistaken loyalty from making his contribution to the solution of one of the most important modern problems, the determination of the proper constitution of a nationalised trading undertaking.

At one time the Post Office was accepted by the Labour movement as the model to which socialised industry would conform, but experiments such as the Central Electricity Board, the B.B.C., and the London Traffic Board have suggested that there is room for much variety in the administration of State enterprises. A consideration, therefore, of the strong and weak points of the Post Office system may afford useful guidance for the future. The criticisms which follow are made with this end in view; they are not directed against persons and are consistent with a firm belief that, taken all round, the Post Office is an example of efficiency which business-men critics might well study to their advantage.

The Post Office is a business, or rather a collection of business undertakings, operated and owned by the State. It is the outstanding example of collective capitalism. It is just this capitalist element which presents a serious obstacle to its developing its highest efficiency. In any business there is a competition for the profits between three parties—the consumers, the producers and the owners. It is of the essence of capitalism that, whatever concessions may be made to the first two parties, the remaining profits should go to the capitalist. In conformity with this the profits of the Post Office are taken by the Exchequer. It is true that crude capitalism is modified by State policy and parliamentary control, but in fact the degree to which the prosperity and efficiency of the undertaking is reflected in advantages to customers and workers is determined by the ease or difficulty with which the Chancellor of the Exchequer can balance his Budget. In the last five years the amount taken annually in profits from the Post Office has increased by some five million pounds.

I contend that long ago a bargain should have been made definitely limiting the amount of the contribution to be made to the State by the Post Office. The amount to be paid should be based on such elements as interest on invested capital, payments in lieu of income tax and local rates, payments for the value of State credit, and a sum representing the monopoly value of the undertaking. I consider that a financial settlement of this kind will have to be arrived at when any industry is nationalised, if a fair balance is to be struck between different groups of producers and consumers, and if the economic rent of monopoly undertakings is to be secured for the community. The taking of profits in excess of this amount is not only an inequitable form of indirect taxation, but also exercises a depressing effect on those engaged in the service. It deprives them of the hope of increased remuneration and tends to slow down development and cramp initiative.

Another obstacle to efficiency is presented by the position of the Post Office as a department of State. Without regard to the very different considerations applicable to a trading undertaking, the Post Office is subjected to the control of the Treasury over detailed expenditure devised to be a check upon spending departments. I do not dispute that this control is usually exercised with common sense, although there are glaring instances to the contrary, but it is wholly incompatible with the flexibility necessary in the conduct of a business concern. It is as if an experienced and intelligent business man had to submit his plans for the development of his business and many of his day to day decisions to the veto of a signatory of the May Report. While I should concede the right of the Treasury to be consulted on such matters as the time for making capital issues, and while provision must be made for relating the general standards of remuneration in the Post Office with those of other Government servants, I am quite clear that Treasury control as now exercised should be abolished.

The general organisation of the Post Office has been framed on the model of other departments. At the head is a transitory political chief, and below him is an army of civil servants graded in a hierarchy from the Secretary to the telegraph boy. The civil service type of organisation was not unsuited to the earliest and still most important business of the Post Office, the carrying of the mails. The provision under monopoly of a ubiquitous service, essential not only to Government for the performance of its functions, but to practically every citizen for his private and business affairs, presented an administrative and technical problem which could be, and was, admirably solved by the civil service. When, however, other services were added which required for their successful operation not the mere passive provision of facilities, but an active campaign of salesmanship in a competitive field, the need for adaptation was not fully realised.

For instance, despite the long standing rivalry of the Trustee Savings Banks, it was not until the competition of the Joint Stock Banks for the savings of the small investor began to be felt that the need for an active campaign on behalf of the Post Office Savings Bank was realised. Similarly it was not appreciated that the telephone service, although a monopoly, is essentially the provision of a certain amenity, distant speech, which, as far as the householder is concerned, has to compete with rival amenities. It was my particular aim while at the Post Office to raise the status of the selling organisation, illuminatingly called the Contract Branch, to a level with that of the administrative and technical sides of the business and to develop a publicity service. A Government department is necessarily impersonal, and its relations with the public are "correct" but hardly "cordial." This is not due to any lack of courtesy on the part of officials, but to the rigidity of the machine. A competitive business needs a well thought out and vigorously directed "public relations" policy.

This brings me to the consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of parliamentary control. It is sometimes contended that parliamentary interpellation keeps an administration at a high level. I doubt whether this is true. I think it tends to timidity and centralisation and has militated against the adoption of a public relations technique in the service. Its effect on the organisation of the department is bad. The Minister and his principal officials, who ought to be concerned with major problems, are constantly diverted to deal with matters which owe their importance only to the status of those who bring them forward.

As regards policy, parliamentary control is very perfunctory and there is little informed criticism. The principal objection to the present system is, however, the constant change of the head of the Post Office for political reasons, and there is certainly weight in this criticism. A succession of short-term Postmasters General leads either

to discontinuity of policy or to the passing of real control into the hands of permanent officials. I consider that it is essential that Parliament should continue to have control over the general policy of State undertakings, but that it should relinquish its right of constant interference in detailed administration. I think the Post Office should be placed under the general direction of the Minister of Transport, who should be responsible for seeing that the administration conforms to the broad lines of policy laid down by Parliament. This policy should be discussed once a year on a report laid before the House of Commons. The department should be administered either by a non-parliamentary Postmaster General or by a Board appointed by the Minister for a term of years. If the new administration is composed of the right persons, the interests of the users of the service should be secured and a right relationship between service and customers established, but it might be well to establish advisory committees, representative of the various users, in London and in each provincial district, which would meet from time to time to make suggestions. It is essential to Post Office efficiency that the employees should be associated as fully as possible with the administration and should understand its policy. A full development of the Whitley Council system, not merely as a means of adjusting grievances, but for enabling the staff to make a constructive contribution to administrative problems is necessary if full efficiency is to be secured. A very difficult question is the determination of the rival claims of the users of the service and the workers for increased amenities. I do not think that this can be settled by a mixed body. It is a matter of national policy to be determined by the nation in relation to national resources and standards of wages.

The space at my disposal forbids me to discuss matters of the internal organisation of the department and prevents me from dealing in anything but the broadest outline with a very difficult problem.

C. R. ATTLEE.

IRAQ AND ITS MINORITIES

THE Permanent Mandates Commission has been considering at Geneva the destinies of Iraq, for which Great Britain is seeking complete emancipation and admission to the League as an independent State. At its last sitting in June the Commission examined the general conditions for the emancipation of a mandated territory; and after laying down that it must have (1) a settled administration capable of maintaining the regular operation of government services, territorial integrity, and political independence, (2) adequate financial resources, and (3) laws and a judicial organisation which will afford equal justice to all, it suggested that the new State should ensure and guarantee the effective protection of racial, linguistic and religious minorities. There is little doubt that Great Britain, the sponsor of Iraq, will be able to satisfy the Commission as to the capacity of the young State to fulfil the general conditions. The serious matter in issue is the assurance of the rights of minorities in the territory.

There are two principal minorities in Iraq, the Kurds, who are Moslems, and the Assyrians and Chaldeans, who are Christians. Both live for the most part in the northern Vilayet of Mosul which was added to the kingdom by the decision of the League in 1925, at the instance of Great Britain. The Kurds number about half a million, and form but one-sixth of the whole Kurdish nation; the rest are divided between Turkey, Persia and Syria.

The Assyrians number about 40,000, of whom 75 per cent. are refugees from Turkey. The Chaldeans are a larger community; and there is in the area a community of 35,000 Yezidis or Devil-worshippers. The still-born Treaty of Sèvres envisaged a separate Kurdish State under the guardianship of the Powers, and that unfulfilled hope has complicated the position. The Frontier Commission in 1925 recommended that special regard should be paid to the desire of the Kurds for the appointment of officers of their race for the administration of the area, dispensation of justice and education, and for making Kurdish an official language. The Iraq Government passed last year a Local Language Law; but that has not satisfied the Kurdish nationalists, and they have bombarded the League with petitions for independence. At its last sitting the Mandates Commission recommended the Council (of which it is the advisory body), (*a*) to request the Mandatory to impress on the Government of Iraq that it should be guided in its dealings with its Kurdish subjects by a spirit of broad toleration towards a minority worthy of respect, and (*b*) to give its closest attention to the uneasiness undoubtedly prevalent in the Kurdish population which is caused by uncertainty as to their fate if the moral protection of Great Britain is withdrawn. The resolution showed, more definitely than is usual in the guarded and allusive language of Geneva, the concern of the Commission for the treatment of the Kurds. Their action on the petition of the spokesman of the Christian minorities showed a like concern. They suggested that the Council "should draw the Mandatory's attention to the necessity of securing from the Iraq Government guarantees for the treatment of racial and religious minorities."

What are the guarantees to be? Separation or home rule would be going too far. The Kurds and the others must remain an integral part of the Iraq State. The proposal of the appointment of a resident representative of the League with the duty of supervising the guarantees afforded to minorities was strongly opposed by our High Commissioner, who spoke as an unqualified Unionist. Such a step would be regarded by Iraq as a derogation of her sovereignty, and would serve to emphasise and perpetuate the artificial divisions between the majority and minorities. Unfortunately, the treaty between Iraq and Great Britain is silent about minorities; and we are unwilling to assume responsibility for the treatment of sections of the population when the State is emancipated. Yet as Lord Lugard, the British member of the Mandates Commission, pointed out in his report on terminating mandates, where the Government is in the hands of an indigenous community and there are important indigenous minorities differing in race and religion who are averse to the withdrawal of the mandate, the Council must be assured of the future well-being and just treatment of the minorities.

The mere adherence of Iraq to the minority clauses which have been laid down for the states in Central and Eastern Europe does not seem to offer the necessary safeguards, judging by European experience. What has been inadequate in Europe, where the minorities are national, is not likely to be adequate in Asia, where the minorities are also religiously indifferent and feeling is more intense. If Iraq, however, were to include in her constitution provisions which would secure to the Kurds a measure of local autonomy and to the Assyrians and other minorities the maintenance of their present privileges with regard to taxation, education, language, religious liberty and communal autonomy, there would be on the one hand no impairment of Iraqi sovereignty and, on the other, a specific assurance that the present position would not be worsened when emancipation is complete. Lastly, though Great Britain would not be pledged to any definite responsibility, so long as her treaty holds and her ambassador has a special position, she would be able to see to the loyal application of the safeguards; and the "Kalan Ingleesi," the word of an Englishman, which is said to have lost credit in the East with the pound sterling, would at least be stabilised.

NORMAN BENTWICH.

A LONDON DIARY

DURING the Cabinet making of the last week it has been really amusing to read the various papers of different political persuasions, but all equally fervent supporters of the National Government. Through the sonorous advice delivered to Mr. MacDonald in leading articles you could hear the twittering of the newspaper proprietors and the political journalists: "Who's in, who's out?" The advice is nearly always naively tendencious and even statements of fact can usually be construed as the writer's hopes. Sir John Simon is to have a "roving commission." Mr. Neville Chamberlain is certain to get the Exchequer in one paper, Mr. Runciman in another. The *Times* advises Mr. MacDonald to "discard above all the type of Minister of whatever age, familiar in every Cabinet, whose presence makes for irritation and waste of time." The *Evening Standard*, however, produced the masterpiece in its solemn advice to Sir Herbert Samuel to resign at once, before the Cabinet is formed, on the ground that, if he were to do so, he would be certain to be the next Prime Minister.

* * *

The really comic thing about this Parliament is that it is fitted up with crowds of patriotic, but not otherwise politically experienced, persons. Most of them never for a moment expected to be in the House: they could not know that the mere label "national" would prove enough to bring down the walls of the stoutest Labour Jericho. The result is really imposing. I find among the Members three marquises, three earls, eight viscounts, and a dozen lords; of duchesses, viscountesses and countesses, one each; 111 Members with military or naval titles, including one lieut.-general, one major-general, and five brigadiers; two rear-admirals and one vice-admiral; 15 colonels, 18 lieut.-colonels, 28 majors, 32 captains, four commanders, three lieut.-commanders and one wing-commander. Add something over 90 knights and baronets and we get a total of roughly 230, or only a trifle less than half the Conservative Party in the House! One is not surprised that the future Viscount Snowden pays a delighted tribute to this Parliament as a "magnificent justification of democracy."

* * *

If Mr. MacDonald is to succeed in preventing the Round-Table Conference from breaking down, he must act quickly and boldly. A breakdown would be absolutely disastrous, and even now, at the eleventh hour, might be avoided. The handling of the Conference, from the British side, may have been astute, but I doubt whether astuteness ever pays in the long run in larger political questions. The astuteness lies in the fact that we have put in the forefront of the picture the Hindu-Moslem question, which is the concern of Indians themselves, and have thus made the success of the Conference depend primarily upon an agreement between the two communities. All the other difficult problems, in which the British are much concerned, have receded into the background, and so, if the Conference fails, the blame can be put by the Government upon the Indians themselves. But it has always been 100 to 1 against a Hindu-Moslem agreement. If the Government really wanted the Conference to succeed, it ought some time ago to have put forward either its own proposals for a temporary settlement of the communal question or a scheme for its settlement by arbitration. Unless something is done quickly, the moment will come when nothing can be done at all.

* * *

I have a vivid memory of A. J. Cook addressing a small group of friendly people during the crisis just before the General Strike. He came hotfoot from an interview with Mr. Baldwin. He made an amazing speech, parts of it almost incoherent, all of it delivered with the intensity of a revivalist preacher trained in the Baptist persuasion. Afterwards we asked him questions. It became clear that he intended to make no concessions of any kind—an attitude which inevitably meant defeat. For in politics the best cause in the world must lose unless there is some slack for negotiation. Every now and again he would stop on he edge of something interesting: "No, a general on the eve of battle must not give away his secrets." I remember saying to myself that here was the most sincere and fanatical of generals, but heaven help the army he led! But heaven did not help the miners, nor did Cook's slogan, "Not a minute on the day, not a penny off the pay." He had no menta ballast; only eloquence, honesty, good-nature and intense feeling. He could be swayed, and was swayed during the weary months of the miners' strike, by the last friend he spoke to. He went backwards and forwards from wild, useless never-endism to reasonable and sane pronouncements. He was hounded down in the press—which has been kind enough to him after his death. His illness began with a kick on the shin, given him, I am told, by a Fascist rough—there were English Fascists in those days. His leg had to be amputated, but the infection spread and finally took him by the throat. No one who worked with him could help liking him nor being exasperated with him. No man was ever more loyal or disinterested or disastrous.

* * *

Several correspondents have written to point out that I was wrong in saying that Government House in Nicosia, Cyprus, was built by the French poet Rimbaud. I was wrong, but my mistake can be explained. A Governor of Cyprus once asked me to come and stay with him at Government House, and as an inducement he told me that it had been built by Rimbaud. I assumed that it was the Government House at Nicosia. I am told by some one who ought to know that there are two Government Houses and that Rimbaud built or was concerned in the building of the one which the Governor occupies in summer at Troados.

* * *

I suggest that law reformers should give their attention to the unfairness and uncertainty of the present system under which bail is either granted or refused in cases of appeal or commitment for trial. The way in which bail is accepted in one case and refused in another is monstrously erratic and inequitable. Consider the following three cases. (1) A woman learning to drive a car started and became flurried, swerved across the road, put her foot on the accelerator instead of the brake; the car mounted the pavement and killed a foot passenger. The magistrate refused bail on the ground that it was a serious offence. At the trial she was acquitted. (2) A car said to be travelling at a very high speed; a policeman steps into the road to signal it to stop; the driver pays no attention; the policeman is struck by the car with such violence that he is thrown into the air, falls on the back of the car and then into the road; the car does not stop; the policeman is dead; a day or two later a young man is arrested and charged; he is released on bail. (3) A well-known peer is convicted under Section 84 of the Larceny Act, 1861, and sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment in the second division; he appeals and is released on bail for two months pending the hearing of the appeal.

* * *

Events have reminded me of a curiously prophetic passage in Lady Oxford's Autobiography (Vol. I. p. 137). Writing in 1920 she said:

> It seems strange to me that the leaders of the great Conservative Party have so often been hired bravos or wandering minstrels with whom it can share no common conviction. I never cease wondering why it cannot produce a man of its own. There must be something inherent in its creed that produces sterility.

* * *

The best of all the confusions I've heard of in this election was the charwoman who said that she was going to vote Conservative "because Mr. MacDonald is a traitor."

CRITIC.

THE DODO

THERE is an abundance of good news in the papers just now. From the Athenæum Club a member announces a national awakening and that we are living through days such as those referred to by Lord Macaulay in the lines:

> Then none was for a party,
> Then all were for the state;
> Then the great man helped the poor,
> And the poor man loved the great.

And, as if this were not enough good news for one day, we find in the same column of the paper a letter from another correspondent who takes Mr. Clynes to task for saying: "I lament class consciousness as much as anyone, but I recognise that it exists." This correspondent is luckily in a position to tell Mr. Clynes that he is wrong. "I submit," he says, "that class conflict between men and women of good will of all classes is to-day as extinct as the dodo: in fact it is non-existent." If he had left out the words "of good will," the refutation of Mr. Clynes would have been still more thorough. But even as it stands the statement is reassuring.

I confess I have never had much class feeling myself. I bear no enmity towards the inhabitants of the slums and certainly do not wish to see them worse off than they are. I regard the miner as my brother, a fellow-citizen equal to the highest in the land in the eyes of the law, and I should become annoyed with him only if he demanded higher wages. I have always been fond of postmen, and I feel that the bond between us is closer than ever, now that they are costing me less as a taxpayer. I beam upon the unemployed worker especially since he has ceased to be grossly overpaid. I have often heard it said that the vice of envy has increased in modern society, but I can lay my hand on my heart and swear that I have never envied an agricultural labourer. When I think of the poor I positively seethe with good will towards them. So long as they keep their places and realise the necessity of equality of sacrifice in times of stress they will have in me an advocate and a friend.

And I am sure that, if I were a poor man, I should feel just as benevolent towards the members of the middle and upper classes. We have it on the authority of many of these that they are being taxed out of existence, and what but pity can one feel for a fellow-creature who is being taxed out of existence? A man in a Rolls-Royce car was recently pointed out to me with the remark that he was paying something like ten shillings of every pound of his income in taxes. I myself should be in despair if I had to pay a ten-shilling tax on my income, and naturally, I felt sorry for the man. And not only does he pay an enormous tax on his income; he is taxed in scores of other ways from which I fortunately escape. He is taxed more heavily on his car than I am on mine. He has to pay a tax for keeping a chauffeur and his various men-servants. His cigars are taxed more heavily than my cigarettes. I do not like to think how much more his champagne costs him because of the duty on it. He cannot even die without having to pay a tax only less appalling than death itself. If you go to Ascot in June and stroll round the paddock between the races, you will see walking up and down the least enviable men and women on earth—men and women bowed down under the burden of taxation, all in process of being taxed out of existence. Nothing speaks more highly for the English character than the grim struggle the upper classes make on such occasions to keep up appearances. Do they let Ascot down by coming in shabby old clothes? I have never seen a man or woman wearing the Royal Enclosure badge at Ascot who would not be ashamed to be seen dressed in any but the best clothes purchasable. Many a woman wears a frock that must have been bought at the expense of an overdraft at the bank. They talk about equality of sacrifice between rich and poor, but there can be no equality of sacrifice between rich and poor. From the very nature of the case the sacrifices of the rich must always be infinitely the heavier. Who, for instance, ever heard of a poor man having to cut down his racing stable by half as a result of taxation, as a member of the Peerage recently had to do? Who ever heard of a shipyard-worker who, because of death duties, was forced to sell a thousand acres of land? Who ever heard of a coal-heaver's being compelled by poverty to dismiss his third gardener? Those who envy the rich do not realise the sufferings of the rich or their own good fortune. How would a working-man like to have to spend £230 a year and extras for sending his son to Eton? Is it not better to be able, as the working-man is, to send one's son to school for nothing? And the working-man has the best of it in a hundred other matters. He can go to cheaper seats at cinemas, can buy cheaper food, can dress in cheaper clothes, can drink cheaper beer in the public-houses. If working-men would but reflect on these things, they would see that there is not much fun in being rich. It was all very well in the reign of Queen Victoria or King Edward, but in Georgian England the rich have a worrying time.

Free from envy of the rich and the poor alike, I sometimes wonder whether people like myself, who are neither, are not in the least enviable position of all. The rich man can afford to pay his taxes: I cannot afford to pay mine. The poor man, on the other hand, has the advantage of me in not having the worst of all taxes to pay. I seem to be the butt and victim of every Government, and Chancellors of the Exchequer will not believe me when I tell them that I am the goose that lays the golden egg and that they are killing it. Often I think I shall have to give up taxis. My life is one long struggle to make ends meet, and the more I work the more I have to pay. This surely is an extraordinarily immoral state of affairs. It was foreseen, I believe, when the income tax was first imposed and when some wise man described it as a tax on thrift. It is a long time since I read Plato's *Republic*, so that I cannot remember whether he discussed the possibility of using taxation as a means of discouraging industry. I am sure he would have disapproved of it. Luckily for the State, we of the income-tax paying classes are richly endowed with public spirit. We know that the tax is immoral, and that it is not worth our while to go on working merely in order to be taxed still more highly. Nevertheless, for the sake of the community, we go on working. If some poltroon raises the cry "What's the use?" we reply with Admiral Gordon Campbell: "All for the country." And, no doubt for years to come we shall go on toiling and toiling, giving and giving, the milch-cow of all Governments, till in the end some Government will lay on the last straw that will break the milch-cow's back.

One thing, at least, emerges clearly from all this; there is no cause in such a world as I have described for envy or class-conflict. All classes in these days are aggrieved classes. To have to pay for a war which seems to have taken place only because every country thought some other country wanted it, is by no means agreeable, and all classes share in the unpleasantness. And if teachers and civil servants feel that it is particularly unpleasant for them to have to suffer a cut in their salaries and wages, I should like to remind them that it was equally unpleasant for us to have to make it. Now that it has been made I hope that both they and we will resolve to grin and bear it. I trust, however, that similar cuts will not be attempted in other trades and professions. I, for one, doubt if I could make ends meet if my income were cut down by even one per cent. Besides, it has already been reduced practically to vanishing point by taxation. People in my position would have a real grievance if any further raids were made on our incomes. It would introduce an element of bitterness into the life of the country, the results of which would be wholly deplorable.

Now that, as a consequence of the General Election, the nation has arrived in halcyon waters, when none are for a party and all are for the State, and the great man helps the poor man, and the poor man loves the great, it would be little short of a calamity if difficulties about wages and salaries were allowed to disturb the blessed calm. Let us preserve the brotherly atmosphere of the hour, all classes joining hands so that no one class can get its hands into the other classes' pockets. That I believe to be the most practicable form of national unity. Y. Y.

A TWO YEAR PLAN FOR AGRICULTURE

IF those of us who, since the repeal of the Corn Production Act, have been crying in the wilderness could have won a hearing, the outlook before our rulers would not be so bleak as it is to-day. But the lessons that the Great War had to teach were forgotten within three years, and now we are confronted with an economic struggle as full of menace as the submarine campaign. With the help of a depreciated pound, and with exports that will not balance imports, notwithstanding the invisible aids dear to economists, we are called upon to provide half a million quarters of wheat every week, two million pounds' worth of butter and bacon, and upwards of a million pounds' worth of meat. Livestock, eggs, fruit, vegetables, jam (or something with that courtesy title) may be left out of our reckoning. We could at a pinch economise where these things are concerned, and the pinch may be near at hand. The politicians who can look round at two million acres lost to the plough and a quarter of a million labourers driven from the fields within a decade have no resource but to blame the other fellow, while, if the truth be told, there is not one party that has not sacrificed the countryside to the towns. Now "it's Mr. Thomas Atkins when the bands begin to play."

The whole political situation is dependent once again upon our fields; there is no safer and better way of reducing national commitments than by saving five million pounds a week on our external food bill. We have the necessary land, the necessary knowledge, the men and the material. All that is needed is a large-scale organisation, something on the Russian lines, modified to sort with British standards but not designed to regard every insular prejudice.

The lost acres must be restored, the workers driven from the land must be brought back, the combinations of clever tradesmen that render the nation's acts of husbandry more or less nugatory must be broken up—unless, of course, we prefer to go hungry rather than trespass upon the profits of the middlemen. The farmer must be rescued, if need be compulsorily, from his own secretive individualism, from Milling Associations, Bakers' Associations, Meat Trusts, Dairy Combines and incurable absurdities like the N.F.U. Guarantees and compulsion run well in double harness; the producer must have the price that will enable him to live, but he must market his goods co-operatively.

Perhaps the greatest trouble that agriculture has to face is the ignorance of the townsman and his Free Trade spokesman, who declare that, if the farmer can win a price that will enable him to live, "your food will cost you more." How often must one repeat that it is not the farmer's price that makes food dear? The farmer, given suitable land with modern machinery, can produce wheat with profit, at two pounds per quarter, and at that price the loaf for which you pay threepence-farthing to-day could be sold at twopence-halfpenny over the counter. The best Grade A tuberculin-tested milk can be produced for one shilling per gallon, the ordinary grade milk that we buy costs us two shillings, and United Dairies, Ltd., pays the high dividend of eleven per cent. The farmer who sends his prime steer to market cannot get sixpence a pound on the hoof. Writing in late October, I see that the price of imported New Zealand, Australian and Argentine wether mutton is nowhere higher than sixpence a pound and, in some cases, is under fourpence. These prices avail to set the figure for our home producer, but they leave the consumer no better off.

The complaints from which home production suffers are many and various, but the worst and most deadly is the middleman. If the Government, instead of going off the deep end in company with the gold standard, had taken its courage (if any) in both hands and controlled the prices of bread, meat, milk, tea and a few other commodities, it could, while taking ten per cent. off wages, have lifted twenty per cent. from the housewife's bills. At the moment of the crisis bread could have been sold over the counter at a penny a pound, meat at an average price of eightpence, milk at twopence a pint, and adequate tea at ninepence a pound. Let it be granted that the shutters would have gone up on many shops where the output is trifling, the methods old-fashioned and the distribution uneconomic—for the making of omelettes the breaking of eggs is a condition precedent.

We need a two year plan for agriculture. The records of the war are available to show us where the land can grow corn. Army huts are cheap in the making, skilled farm hands abound. There is no milk problem other than that created by the combines. Within the given time we should be self-suppliers in the matter of pork, bacon, butter, cheese, eggs and vegetables. Two years hence, with the aid of the caterpillar tractor, the harvester-thresher, and the perfected drying machine, we could grow enough wheat for four and a half days, probably five, out of seven. We might in that time transfer half a million workers from the dole to the fields and reduce our imports by over two hundred million pounds a year. These are not idle fancies; they are hard facts to which I am convinced the greatest of our agricultural authorities would subscribe.

To reach the desired goal the country wants a Minister of Agriculture whose vision is backed by plenary powers. Lord Lee of Fareham is probably the man best fitted for the job, and if political disagreements could be forgotten for the common good, Dr. Addison and Mr. E. F. Wise should be associated with him. They would require an assurance that for the term of the completion of the plan, and a full year or even two years after, they should not be hampered by any school of politicians. They would have to fight millers, bakers, meat kings, milk kings, shipping interests, even farmers, particularly those who have a foot in the middleman's camps, but they know, and from study and experience, that they could make these islands seventy-five per cent. self-supporting and shift the balance of trade on to the right side.

It is extremely difficult to deal patiently with the politicians who have not grasped the significance of the crisis even to-day. When you meet Tweedledum, he tells you that the farmers must have protection, and when Tweedledee becomes coherent he tells you that nationalisation is the thing.

But the protection the farmer needs most is from the men who handle his produce to his own undoing, and so far as nationalisation goes, what does the ownership matter? The question that concerns us now is the fashion in which the land is handled, and here we want authority, and a two year programme of swift recuperation.

The point that calls for special emphasis is that a national effort is demanded to raise our food production to the highest point. Sops to farmers are useless; the more they make the more the middlemen will demand. The Government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, must control the passage of the nation's food from the fields to the table, giving the farmer a return for his labours and the consumer the low price that would obtain if the handling were reduced to the indispensable minimum.

The keystone of the arch of financial stability bears a curious likeness to a many-furrowed plough drawn by a tractor. S. L. B.

TO THE MAJORITY OF THE MAJORITY

whom Mr. Churchill congratulates on their "freedom" to force through a purely Tory programme.

HOW pleasant to start on your national mission
With a mandate in blank and with no opposition!
For now you are in, 'twere quixotic to ask
How the nation desired you should tackle your task;
And if third-party voters secured you your seat,
Does it matter? You're in, and they're easy to cheat;
While the leader, whose banner you carried with pride,
Now your turn has been served, can be dumped overside.
In short, as our Winston so joyfully sees,
For the life of the House you can do as you please;
Which means you can pass, though your allies refuse,
Any Bills the Conservative caucus may choose.
Yet there's always a catch! It is well you should note
Economics ignore a majority vote,
And despite all your triumphs, the world will reflect
The same dull old sequence of cause and effect.
You cannot, for instance, by voting, procure
For a world-wide distemper a national cure,
And if Germany comes with a crash to the ground,
No laws—and no tariffs—will safeguard the pound;
So the safety of credit has still to be sought
By the painful, unpopular process of thought.
You can wreck the Disarmament Congress, of course;
But you can't secure peace in a world ruled by force.
You can frown upon Gandhi, and boast how you scored,
But you can't keep a market with halter and sword.
And you can't stop class war, if the Bills that you pass
Reflect, in each clause, the behests of a class.
What is more to the purpose, you cannot control
How the pendulum swings when we're next at the poll;
So it might, on the whole, prove a sound inspiration
To forget you are Tories, and think for the nation.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

[*We have only been able to publish a few representative letters from scores received on various subjects arising out of the election this week. Correspondents are asked to be as brief as possible.*—ED. N.S. & N.]

THE ELECTION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Surely Mr. Clifford Allen carries his enthusiasm for Mr. MacDonald to a strange extreme, when he compares his present "retreat" with that of Lenin. Lenin never turned his back until he had achieved a courageous revolution against heavy odds. He then beat two retreats, one major and one minor. The minor one, to which Mr. Allen refers, was to make temporary concessions to small private traders, when Russian towns were desperately hungry. This was after large-scale industry had been seized on behalf of the people and the banks were also under public control.

Lenin's other "retreat" was the peace of Brest Litovsk, when he alone had the courage of his internationalism and made what appeared a shameful peace with Germany against his own national pride and that of his supporters.

Mr. MacDonald has never since the end of the war made one bold stroke on behalf of the people. At the first breath of bankers' disapproval he cries panic and abandons his forces to disaster: and he, who knew the war madness of 1914, and the almost equal madness of the "Hang the Kaiser" election, has, notwithstanding his chatter of international peace, not hesitated to let loose yet again the demon of British nationalism in a funk. This at a time when national passions were beginning to subside a little, as it was vital they should if Europe was to be saved at all.

This electoral decision is a response to panic, and it is a travesty to call it a vote of confidence in anybody or anything. It is not easy to forget the specious arguments of Liberals—*young* Liberals at that—in the pages of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION; nor the hard-faced intensity of other middle-class people in railway trains, talking fearfully of their investments; nor the fear and anger in the voices of workers that cried "Make the foreigner pay," "keep out their goods" at election meetings.

Mr. Allen asks us to turn and smile upon those who let loose this savagery upon us, as one might ask the tramp on whom one has set the dogs to come in, bleeding as he is, and serve at table. He asks for the solution of four problems, in which he invites Labour's co-operation—security and disarmament, international currency, our banking system, and India. Every one of these had a better chance of solution before Mr. MacDonald's Leninesque retreat; every one of these is made the more difficult by the flood of nationalist panic which he not only had not the courage to withstand, but actively fostered. It was just because we were at last fumbling towards the knowledge that "National Government" was more dangerous to the nation than international co-operation that our reactionaries precipitated their helpful "crisis."—Yours, etc.,

Telegraph House, DORA RUSSELL.
Harting, Petersfield.
November 2nd.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—May I briefly reply to Mr. Clifford Allen's questions in your current issue?

(1) There can be no parallel between the cases of Lenin and Mr. MacDonald. Lenin was a revolutionary dictator. He never concealed for an instant that his object was to introduce Socialism at the earliest possible moment. He never made arrangements with his political opponents; and he never pretended that the New Economic Policy was anything but a temporary tactical manœuvre to be followed, as it has been, by a vigorous Socialist advance. Finally, he took care to carry his party with him.

Mr. MacDonald is a parliamentary politician who deliberately, in 1924 and 1929, took office in circumstances which made it impossible for him to prosecute his party's essential policy of Socialism. We know now, from his own admission during the Seaham contest, that he no longer believes it possible—if he ever did—to introduce Socialism in our time. Consistently with this, he has entered into arrangements with the opponents of Socialism to carry out a policy designed, not to prepare the way for a new Socialist advance, but to make capitalism solvent and stable. Finally, he entered into those arrangements in the teeth of his own party, and has now done his level best to smash it.

(2) The methods by which this election has been fought by the renegade Labour leaders, and particularly by Mr. Snowden, will, I hope and trust, never be forgotten or forgiven by any self-respecting Socialist. The questions of disarmament, finance, India, and so forth, to which Mr. Allen refers, will be dealt with by the now omnipotent Tory Party in their own fashion, and no effort of the Opposition will have the smallest effect on their treatment while this Parliament lasts. The business of the Labour Party is to educate, agitate and organise in the country, and to stand in readiness for the inevitable *dies irae*.—Yours, etc.,

13, Laurel Road, ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON.
Wimbledon, S.W.20.
October 30th.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—As one of the few non-Russian witnesses of the Russian Revolution I wish most decisively to controvert Clifford Allen's reasoning, when he compares MacDonald's latest act of apostacy with Lenin's masterly compromise in 1921. It is an outrage on the memory of that great Russian statesman to compare him with the present leader of the "National" Government. A comparison with Judas is better, except that it is unfair on Judas.

What are the facts? When Lenin made his famous retreat to the New Economic Policy to buy off the neutrality of the peasants and urban tradesmen, he already had in his hand (1) *the full control of the political machinery of the State and the backing of a coalition of revolutionary parties;* and (2) *the full control of the State bank and the financial machinery of the Republic.* The first was accomplished, as I witnessed, by the seizure of power in October, 1917, in Petrograd. The second was accomplished

by the Decree on Banking Control, promulgated in December of that year and put into effect gradually during the course of 1918. So that when Lenin went to negotiate with the peasants and the traders, he already had two most important keys of power in *his* hand. He could thus afford to be generous and at the same time not give way on essentials.

Contrast that with MacDonald's position. Does anyone imagine that, even if he wished to, he could influence the policy of the Bank of England to stop the deflation ramp and organise a managed currency if the City set its face against such a policy? He has not the political power, as Lenin had, because the majority behind him are the very people who have won an election in order to retain the existing banking system. He has not the economic power, because the City could smash him, if it wished, as it has smashed the Labour Government. He might try temporising with the City, but he might as well try to pacify a man-eating tiger by feeding it on lollipops. Faced with such a situation, is it likely that MacDonald is the man to try conclusions with high finance? Those of us who have suffered under him in the Parliamentary Labour Party for two and a half years know his masterly capacity for finding a hundred good reasons for doing nothing.

Clifford Allen appeals to us to "put aside the mood of party anger" and co-operate. My feeling is that we should let the Government get on with its job, neither helping nor hindering. If last week we were supposed to be out to raid the poor man's savings and let the £ go west, we are hardly the people now for the National Government to call in for consultation. Besides, Parliament is not the only method by which the workers' standards can be defended. If the City attempts wage cuts or tariffs to reduce costs and lower standards there is always the industrial arm for organised Labour to fall back on.—Yours, etc.,

The Grove, Taynton, Near Gloucester. November 2nd. M. PHILIPS PRICE.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The explanation which my friend Dr. Needham offers of Labour's indecision seems to me to accentuate rather than to excuse the moral and intellectual failure involved in such indecision. Labour, it is suggested, cannot make up its mind whether to prevent or to promote a breakdown of the present order because no one knows whether a sudden break must come or not. Surely the uncertainty of the future makes such vacillation indefensible. If it were certain that the present order must break down and that the consequent chaos and attendant suffering cannot now be averted, Labour would be justified in declining to accept responsibility or to make sacrifices in the hopeless endeavour to postpone the inevitable. But if the topography of future events is uncertain, if there is a chance of preventing breakdown and chaos, it is the obvious duty of Labour to share responsibility and make sacrifices along with others to avert disaster. To hesitate to work the pumps because no one knows whether the ship will go down or not is sheer folly, and a shirking of a plain duty. Labour's indecision is rooted in a manifest confusion of thought and involves an impossible attempt to follow revolutionary and evolutionary methods at one and the same time. Such indecision is the main reason why Labour was defeated and why it deserved defeat at the recent election. The nation quite rightly declined to trust a party which did not know its own mind, which was not clear whether to make sacrifices to prevent a breakdown or whether passively if not actively to promote such a result. I venture to think that there was no vote against Socialism as a doctrine at the election. No doubt many Conservatives voted against Socialism, and naturally Labour supporters like to regard the election as fought on the issue "Capitalism versus Socialism." To admit the simpler issue on which the election was really fought would compel Labour to condemn itself. The simpler issue was whether we should or should not stand together and act together as a people to maintain British credit and ensure national solvency. On this issue Labour was hopelessly confused and in the wrong, and the nation has emphatically condemned Labour's confusion of thought and practical indecision. I regret the inadequate representation of Labour in the new House of Commons as deeply as any one, but I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that the Labour Party has been the architect of its own misfortunes.—Yours, etc.,

Woodbrooke, Birmingham. H. G. WOOD.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—There is no body of people in the country who call themselves Marxists, so presumably it is the I.L.P. that Mr. Wood attacks in your last issue. May an ordinary member of that body explain how completely Mr. Wood misunderstands and so misrepresents us?

Suppose that by a miracle the Labour Party had won the election. We know from Mr. Baldwin and the Bishop of London that the pound would have collapsed, one supposes by foreigners withdrawing their funds in this country and English patriots sending their money abroad. We know also, from what many employers put into their pay envelopes the week before the election, that works all over the country would close down. How would Mr. Wood and his friends wish a Labour Government to behave in that situation? The average I.L.P. member thinks there are only two alternatives. The Government could either submit to these threats, as the Prime Minister and his associates did last August, and thereby abandon its Socialist aim. Or it could accept the challenge, and take charge of and operate the mines, factories and ships abandoned by their owners. People like Mr. Wood say the Party is not ready to cope with such disasters. They are perfectly right, we say lamentably right. That is why we believe they ought to be faced. The Party will never prepare to meet unlikely emergencies, and we believe these are more than probable. The more terrifying they are, the greater our duty to warn the country of them and the more urgent the need to organise in advance measures to prevent the export of liquid capital and the paralysis of industry. The Party, we hold, ought to be working on these measures now and ought to fight the next election on them.

But that does not mean that we either try to bring about or welcome these terrible dangers. The fact that Marx predicted them does not prove them fanciful. The foremost men in Church and State agree with Marx in this matter. Marx is such a bogy to the people who have never read him that one scarcely dares to defend another of his amazing predictions, namely, that Capitalism would go down as much through internal decay as because of assaults from outside. For more than thirty years I scoffed at my fellow-Socialists for saying that Capitalism was in dissolution. Since August I have scoffed no longer. Can any of us, for example, hope that so long as industry is conducted on the basis of profit, unemployment can be cured? After all, the last stage in Western civilisation, feudalism, ended mainly because it disintegrated, because lords could not protect, just as now private employers cannot make scientific invention fruitful to men.

Though a Socialist, I believe Capitalism has served us well. But those who think we can get any more out of it deceive themselves. It may prove to be the case that Socialism by orderly stages is unattainable. It would seem that anti-Socialists can make sure of that if they want to. If they do, what is the sense of calling people Marxists because we respect Marx for seeing so far and so truly, and, like him, hope that in such a crisis we shall win through?—Yours, etc., NORMAN LEYS.

POLITICS AND RELIGION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Can you find space for a brief reply to S.M.G.'s letter in your last issue? He says that people will think, on reading what the Bishop of London said, "that though bishops and clergy have given thinly veiled advice to vote for the National Government, not one has publicly enjoined his flock to study both sides of the question in the newspapers of both parties."

May I assure him that from hundreds of pulpits in the past few weeks our congregations have been asked by the clergy to do this very thing—to study both sides, to think things out, to beware of being stampeded by the lies or half-truths which are so freely circulated at election time, to form their own opinions? The wild remarks of one or two bishops are quoted in all the papers; our humbler utterances are not quoted; reporters do not attend our services.

Why should the Church as a whole be judged by the "panic" utterances of a septuagenarian bishop? Thousands of us clergy deplore those utterances intensely. May I add that in these most distressing weeks many of us clergy have been enormously cheered by the sane outlook of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION and of the *Manchester Guardian*.—Yours, etc.,

Swinton Vicarage, Manchester. DENIS FLETCHER, Hon. Canon of Manchester.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—How can I, as one of the clergy of the Opposition side in politics, deny the truth of the charge, which "S. M. G." in to-day's THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION brings against our Church? I am only too painfully aware of its truth. I cannot deny it. I would give anything, if I could. When we stand up for truth and progress, as I have done, we are immediately accused of "mixing up politics and religion," and are told not to do so. Our congregations become offended, as mine has done, and church attendances and subscriptions drop off. But when priests and bishops on the other side take part in politics, as the Bishop of London has done in the midst of the election, they become patriots and true churchmen! In the same issue of the *Manchester Guardian* that I read of a London vicar urging his congregation to vote and canvass for Mr. Duff Cooper, in the famous Westminster by-election, I read of a Socialist curate, Rev. Jack Bucknell, having to leave his curacy in Cornwall for "mixing up politics with religion." In one parish that I was vicar of in 1924 another parson publicly thanked God in my pulpit for the defeat of the Socialists as worse enemies to England than the Germans! And in that election up and down the country, as I was told by a bishop, clergy were taking the chair for the Conservative candidate. The neighbouring vicar to me there signed the Tory candidate's nomination papers.

The Bishop of London says that "a man does not cease to be a citizen of the British Empire on becoming a bishop," and makes that an excuse for his political action. Would to God they would remember that when we Socialist priests do the same! There is a wide spirit expressing itself in Socialists such as the present Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Truro, the Mirfield Fathers, Canon Donaldson, and in many a humbler name of vicars and curates unknown, that will and is slowly changing the whole tone and outlook of the Church of England.—Yours, etc.

WALTER B. GRAHAM.

Sillistone Vicarage.
Barnsley.
October 30th.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—By a strange turn of fortune's wheel, the Labour Party, who showed little sympathy with the Liberal Party in 1924, now find themselves not only in the same position as the Liberals after the general election in that year, but even worse off. Then the 58 Liberal M.P.s represented over 5,000,000 voters; now 51 Labour M.P.s represent about 7,000,000 voters.

A British general election is like a game on Gilbert's billiard table, played

> On a cloth untrue,
> With a twisted cue
> With elliptical billiard balls.

It is obvious that our political machine has broken down. In thirteen years we have had six elections, in three of which bloated majorities were returned as a result of special circumstances and of our antiquated electoral system. Two of the others led to disastrous attempts at minority government, which seriously injured the party which undertook the impossible task. All these years have been largely wasted owing to the failure of the House of Commons to reflect the real balance of opinion in the country and of politicians to take account of that opinion.

It is objected that scientific methods of representation encourage the group system, which leads to wicked bargaining between parties. The group system has given Germany stable government in a period of great difficulty, and, as for bargaining, what will continental critics who are clever enough to follow our antics say of the comings and goings and pilgrimages to Churt which preceded this recent election?—Yours, etc.,

Hampstead. GEOFFREY TOULMIN.

THE UNEMPLOYED

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Regarding "Critic's" statement that the unemployed are badly organised, in that they (unlike the Suffragettes) do not make orderly and intelligent demonstrations, may I, as an unemployed workman, give the reason, which is simply—"lack of means"? Apart from the fact that the Suffragette demonstrations were considered in their day as by no means orderly and ofttimes both unseemly and unintelligent, it must be remembered they had immense wealth behind them, whereas the unemployed have hardly the means to live, let alone create an organisation, and can therefore carry on only in a casual and intermittent manner. While the teachers and civil servants during the last few months have spent many thousands of pounds in advertising and organising to bring their case before the public and have the means to employ professional lobbyists and publicity agents, the unemployed are doomed to a few isolated outdoor meetings, which, unless there is some untoward disturbance useful to the press, is ignored by the newspapers. And surely the sensible employment of our people is the greatest issue of our time, as apart from the suffering in health and spirit of the unemployed themselves, and especially of the large numbers of young men and women, whose hopes are blighted and faculties are stunted, it is also still more serious for the nation, whose collective incompetence is such that it denies to the unemployed people their desire to partake in the activities of industry for the production and use of wealth which alone can make it healthy and strong—Yours, etc.,

119, Endlesham Road, F. THOMPSON.
Balham, S.W.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Just recently your paper published some interesting correspondence which arose from Mr. Constant Lambert's plea for the recording of less well-known music.

Now the Gramophone Company (H.M.V.) are appealing for 500 direct subscribers to a Hugo Wolf Society, and Mr. Compton Mackenzie (whose paper *The Gramophone* should be read by everyone) and who dubs your correspondents "passionate idealists," laments to the length of a whole page in this month's issue the fact that the appeal is not going well.

Of course it is not. The gramophone dealer, who is expected to take a dozen different recordings of Handel's *Largo*, gets nothing out of it. All he sees is the probable loss of 30s. which his customer spends on Hugo Wolf records instead of something he makes a profit on. Why not invite the dealer to help? If one in every twenty-four dealers throughout the country got one subscriber the desired end would be achieved.

My company supports the Society because it believes it is a good thing, but we cannot *live* that way.—Yours, etc.,

11, Grape Street, W.C.2. REGINALD W. BRAYNE.
November 2nd.

AN APPEAL

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In the multitude of causes that appeal through your columns to the British public, Philosophy might seem to be the last that has a claim on the attention of practical men. But it is not difficult in the present disorganisation of beliefs in fundamental principles that is manifest in every department of life to see the need of a cultivation of systematic thought that has the most intimate bearing upon practice. We venture, therefore to invite public attention to the work of The British Institute of Philosophy.

Founded in 1925, with the late Lord Balfour as its President, the Institute has now a membership of over 1,400, which includes, in addition to the general body of members, almost all the representative philosophers in Great Britain as well as many distinguished scientists. The Institute publishes a quarterly review *Philosophy*; it holds courses of Public Lectures and organises Reading Circles; it arranges for the delivery of addresses by men of authority.

In addition to the work which is being done in London, there are active local centres in Bangor, Cardiff, Liverpool, Newcastle and Durham, and Sheffield.

The Institute is anxious that its work should be more generally known, in order that an enlarged membership may open to a wider public an opportunity to study the principles that underlie human experience and action in science, art, politics, morals, and religion. Those of your readers who would desire to become members of the Institute (the subscription is one guinea including the quarterly review) or to obtain further information with regard

to it, are invited to communicate with The Director of Studies at the rooms of the Institute in University Hall, 14, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.—Yours, etc.,

S. ALEXANDER. J. H. MUIRHEAD.
ARTHUR EDDINGTON. RUSSELL.
WILLIAM EBOR RUTHERFORD.
W. R. INGE. HERBERT SAMUEL.
A. D. LINDSAY. W. R. SORLEY.
OLIVER LODGE.

November 5th.

THE LONDON GROUP

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—By a slip in my letter of October 24th I described the picture called *Ampthill Square* as being by Miss Hepworth. The painter of this picture is Miss Barbara Mackenzie-Smith.—Yours, etc.,

ROGER FRY.

Miscellany

AT THE COUNT

[BY A LABOUR CANDIDATE'S WIFE]

WE got to the Town Hall of Sallington about ten o'clock. My papers were not in order, so I waited behind the door, which was ajar so that I could just see the open, guarded space in front, and the row of police, and then the crowd behind, tossing and shouting under the white glare of the electric lamps, impatient and malevolent, the good old Sallington crowd in a passion for safety and protected trades and their own cherished possessions! It was a terrifying noise; it kept on suddenly pounding up into inchoate savagery or else into some tune one half knew, jazz or national.

At last I was called up to the room where the count was going on, and sworn in again. They let me past. He said: "We've lost." I didn't quite believe that, even when our agent came up and shook hands rather hard, smiling and looking green. At the long table they were still doing the first count, unfolding and smoothing out the voting papers, making them into neat piles and throwing out the spoilt ones. The table got tidier and tidier, and then someone would empty out one of the black, shiny ballot boxes, and the yellowish papers tumbled into a pile and the thing began again. "That's Barton's End": the papers spilled out and we leaned forward over the shoulders of the tellers. It was one of our best districts. I'd thought it was 90 per cent. solid; it wasn't—not in votes. We wondered how much those little slips which had gone out with the last pay envelopes, suggesting that, if Labour got in, the works would have to be shut, had to do with the change-over.

I went on round the table. Here was a solidly respectable box, almost all the crosses against the wrong name. I watched the papers being unfolded and smoothed, willing them to be right! Whenever one was, it was lovely. Jack Maret came and talked to me; I had never noticed before that he had blue eyes and very sensitive fingers. His coat smelt slightly of chemicals, as many of our workers' coats did, for a lot of them were in the big Synthex works.

He and the Liberal candidate talked friendlily to one another. His wife and I talked, too; like me, she had spent most of the day dashing about committee rooms. "And at six," she said, "I felt the only thing to do was to go home and bath my baby." There were only three Conservatives in the room then, not including their candidate. Then suddenly bad news came sweeping across, news from the other Sallington divisions—Medwick and Pulham both lost. And then—worse news: "Henderson's out."

They began to count the papers into piles of twenty-five, according to the votes. We all watched intently. A Liberal woman saved one of our votes which was going into the Conservative pile and I felt thrilled and grateful. But by that time it was not only certain that we were beaten, but that we were beaten in good company. The results kept on coming in, whispered up from the door. It was like living in a history book: an epic of defeat. Someone said the Liberals were going to lose their deposit. I said, "Oh, I hope not!" But our agent answered me, bitterly: "I hope to God they are!" If I stay in politics as long as he has, I expect I shall feel like that, too. All the other Sallington divisions were lost or losing on the count. In that hot room we were safe from the roaring of the crowd, but at the door one could just hear the diluted waves of savagery come pulsing in. Joe Brooks looked utterly done with depression and tiredness; he had been at it the whole time, and to-morrow he was going back to the factory at eight in the morning. I couldn't think of anything to say.

Then the Conservative candidate came in with his wife and a lady friend. I had often seen his face staring out of the middle of a Union Jack, but always slightly querulous, never so shining with pleasure! The two ladies sat down and remained sitting. His wife was very elegantly dressed, with tan silk stockings, and pearls, and a pink satin blouse under her smartly cut coat. She had a large bouquet of white heather tied up with red, white and blue. She did not speak to me or to the Liberal candidate's wife, but she talked loudly to her friend in the middle-class Sallington intonation.

Now the piles of twenty-five were recounted and put into tens. I thought, through the rustling, of our last meeting of unemployed. Their leader was a mechanic, out of a job for eight months, with two small children; he had fair hair and a pinkish muffler. It had been difficult enough to manage before the cuts, but he had kept cheerful; he still had something to hope for, and he worked for us the whole time. He wouldn't have much left to hope for now. I kept on wondering when he'd get a hot meal again, with meat.

The returning officer had all the spoiled papers collected, and we crowded up to watch. At least most of us did; the two Conservative ladies stayed sitting. After that the packets of 250 votes were put out on to the tables. Jack Maret came and we talked about Europe and how likely it was that foreign policy would get mucked up now. He said suddenly how much he had wanted to travel, but never had the chance. It was past midnight by then. I was getting more and more annoyed by the bad manners of the Conservatives, though I suppose they were only the natural manners of jubilant Sallington manufacturers. The Liberals were all bristling, too. Jack Maret looked at the two ladies pretty bitterly; it was certainly a pity that they had put on all the pearls.

The Liberal votes were counted first. He had lost a good deal since the last election, but his deposit was safe. We were all of us counting the packets by eye, guessing at the numbers. It was all being done very efficiently. Suddenly I felt desperately tired. He and I were standing together, watching; I took his arm. If we had been by ourselves it would have been very painful, but we weren't. He said: "I know we are right." I felt less tired. I was violently glad I wasn't one of the victors, then.

The Mayor came in; we all crowded towards his end of the room. There was a block of tellers, and the Conservatives, between Jack Maret and me, and the rest of us. The two ladies had at last got up. It struck me as absolutely definite that the six Conservatives had a different kind of make-up to either us or the Liberals: an enviable toughness; they were blind, not aware, not sensitive, as Jack Maret was, working in the factory all day and one of the Movement. No, the two Conservative ladies were definitely extroverts—I wanted to think of highbrow words, anything to keep oneself steady. The tellers were excited and glad it was over. The Mayor read out the figures and congratulated the Conservative.

The new Conservative member made a speech; he said it was a clean fight. I have not been long enough in politics to know what, if anything, that means. Then they all seemed to be shaking hands and saying rather meaningless things. The Conservative agent shook hands with me; I didn't want to. The new Member had said once that government was just a matter of business. "Feeling bad, are you?" said Jack Maret. "No," I whispered, "feeling like a duchess!" I didn't see how I was to avoid shaking more hands, but he laughed a little and I felt his arm across my shoulders, turning me round, and he whispered: "I don't want you to meet the barmaid," and when I turned back the Conservatives had all gone.

We went out of the Town Hall into the open, lit space, and the crowd yelled at us. Only, as we edged past, a man shook hands, wishing us better luck next time. He must have been another of the unemployed.

RECENT CONCERTS

THERE has not been much really new since the London musical season began last month, the most promising novelty, Mr. William Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast* for chorus and orchestra not being due until November 25th at a B.B.C. symphony concert. Nevertheless, there has been much to incite comment, and the comment—to do the events justice—ought often to be of a bitter character.

When our fine B.B.C. symphony orchestra began its series of Wednesday night Symphony Concerts at the Queen's Hall on October 14th, it was at once apparent that it had not yet recovered from the damage suffered during the Promenade Season. Sir Henry Wood's conducting reminds me of the famous principle of Marshal Foch—*toujours attaquer!* These shock tactics are, perhaps, the only way for one conductor to carry through the ordeal of six weeks' nightly concerts of long and arduous programmes, but that the orchestral playing suffers from them there can be no doubt. A dull mechanical metre takes the place of a living rhythm, there is no buoyancy or elasticity, the tone in every department of the orchestra becomes coarse and the ensemble goes to pieces because it is being imposed from without, not achieved within by the musicians of the orchestra being alive to each other's playing—as happens in a good string quartet. Under Dr. Adrian Boult there was a decided improvement, but the damage is not to be repaired at once. It is to be hoped that the present system of having only one conductor throughout the Promenade Season will be dropped. The Promenades offer a unique chance for our young conductors to get an intensive experience. In my opinion there should be three conductors a week, which would give two concerts to each one and perhaps it were best that no permanent engagements were made, but that all our promising young conductors were given a chance. This would give that variety and elasticity that the Promenades need and would add greatly to their attractiveness.

The first performance of the Concert Club this season did not add to its reputation. Indeed, it was perhaps the least creditable concert that the Club has yet given. Dr. Malcolm Sargent does not seem to be improving as a conductor. He seems to be in danger of getting the rigidity and insensitiveness of a military bandmaster. The soloist, Gregor Piatigorsky, a very able violoncellist, was also disappointing. In the Dvořák 'cello concerto, a work that demands ease and flexibility, he was stiff and over-emphatic, and in the Strauss *Don Quixote* variations for 'cello and orchestra there was imperfect collaboration between soloist and orchestra, and the performance was a poor one on the part of everybody concerned—that is, judging it by the high standard we have learned to expect at these concerts. Some recovery was made at the Club's second concert this week when Emmi Leisner, from the Berlin State Opera, took the place at short notice of Sigrid Onegin and sang like the magnificent artist she is. I would ask those ardent "patriots" who write glibly of banning all but British musicians to name one English singer of the same class as Emmi Leisner. We don't, unfortunately, possess one and we are never likely to unless critics and musicians here persistently try to raise our standards. It was not until the visits of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra opened the public's ears to the shoddy quality of our own orchestral playing that we got a good orchestra in London. Such singers as Sigrid Onegin and Emmi Leisner show the gulf between our own best and the best foreign singers on the concert platform, and it is a bigger gulf even than that which yawns between English and foreign operatic singers. Those who heard Emmi Leisner sing Schubert's *Der Tod und das Mädchen* last Monday night will know what I mean when I say that such *lieder* singing does not yet exist in this country.

Another fine performance was Margarete Teschemacher's singing of Richard Strauss's *Three Hymns of Hölderlin* for soprano and orchestra, performed for the first time in England at the B.B.C. Concert of October 21st. These "Hymns" are considerably later than *Der Rosenkavalier*, and the appalling *Alpine Symphony* (in which there is hardly a trace of Strauss's genius left). He shows in them the same virtuosity in blending voice and orchestra that he shows in *Der Rosenkavalier*, and the first Hymn in which this virtuosity is, as often happens with Strauss, used for its own sake is as commonplace as the majority of Strauss's songs. The second and third Hymns are something much better. The musical ideas themselves have virtue and "Homecoming" and "Love," as they are entitled, have an extraordinary beauty of texture as well as a rare expressiveness of mood. As a conductor Richard Strauss is delightful. He does what so few conductors do, allows the orchestra to be musicians—even demands it of them. His *Sinfonia Domestica* was a joy to hear under his baton, and in this work we may see how essentially lyrical Strauss's genius is. There was a time when he was thought to be a great musical philosopher, but whoever listens carefully to his *Also sprach Zarathustra* will discover that he is not. In all his best works, from *Don Juan* and *Till Eulenspiegel* to the *Sinfonia Domestica* and *Der Rosenkavalier*, there is a constant stream of warm graceful melody and an unfailing invention of dramatic effect.

It is reassuring, perhaps, to be able to find some examples where our own musicians have little or nothing to learn. During the past month we have heard two famous pianists, each of whom was playing a Beethoven concerto. Mr. Wilhelm Backhaus played the E Flat Concerto at the first Royal Philharmonic Concert on October 22nd and Mr. Harold Bauer played the G Major Concerto at the B.B.C. Concert on October 28th. Mr. Backhaus is a pianist one must respect. He has a solid musical understanding and when he achieves a sustained concentration on what he is playing he can be very good. He has that substantial technique which gives the auditor confidence that the pianist always has reserves to call upon, but too often his technique runs away with him, his mind is absent from what he is doing, and we get from him mechanical stereotyped playing. His performance of the Beethoven E Flat Concerto after a rather perfunctory beginning was an unusually vital and satisfying one. I wish I could say the same for Mr. Harold Bauer's presentation of the G Major Concerto. Mr. Bauer's technique does not give one any sense that he has all and more than all that is needed. His right hand even sounds feeble and his trills and shakes have a flimsy character. But worst of all was his conception or lack of conception of what he was playing. The slow movement of the G Major Concerto is one of the marvels of music but one would never have thought so to hear Mr. Bauer play it. In fact his mincing, rather self-conscious, style was totally unsuited to this work. I should not be surprised to learn that Mr. Bauer is the schoolgirl's idol. In fact I might almost describe him as a matinée pianist.

W. J. TURNER.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Criminal Comedy

Perhaps Mr. Anthony Armstrong could, if he would, write a good detective story or a good comedy, but *Well Caught* has the characteristics of both without quite enough of the substance of either. It is neither plagiarism nor parody. However, it forms a pleasant if unsubstantial entertainment, with a suggestion of the Christmas charade about it; a suggestion that the cast exploited to good advantage, particularly in the first act. The productions at the Embassy are becoming more and more polished, and are in truth worthy of better plays than this one. That two members of the cast playing bears round a sofa whilst searching for stolen emeralds were very funny, and that this was among the best moments in the play, will suggest the excellence of the acting as well as the limitations of the material.

"The Road to Singapore"

William Powell's new film (at the Regal), *The Road to Singapore*, is noticeable for its extraordinary *denouement*. a happy elopement. Up till now, Hollywood, despite all its vagaries, has remained respectful of the marriage bond. However badly a couple get on together, however unsuited they evidently are to each other, they always, before the final fade-out, discover that they have always loved each other without knowing it. In *The Road to Singapore* we wait for this inevitable discovery, and are in the end disappointed. There are some quite good shots of Khota in *The Road to Singapore* and some amusing portraits of old Etonians keeping up the glory of the White Race amid the whiskey-and-sodas of the Gymkhana Club. William Powell takes the part of a much misunderstood man, who does not deserve his reputation as a home-smasher, which ultimately enables him to leave for Singapore with somebody else's wife and not lose caste in the process. The wife (an ex-nurse) deserts her medical husband because he is too absorbed in his practice as a doctor to pay sufficient attention to her moods. His suggestion that she should help him in some of his cases is angrily scouted as an unworthy suggestion. "I came out to be a wife, not a nurse," she exclaims with dignity. In a non-theatrical world one might have supposed that a woman with experience as a nurse would be glad to help her husband in his work of beneficence among natives who are the prey to tropical fever. But in the words of my distinguished colleague, Miss Edith Shackleton, "It is only on the stage that regular and remunerative employment is considered an undesirable quality in a husband." William Powell is always worth seeing. But this time the setting is hardly worthy of the man. Still *The Road to Singapore* is one of the better pre-releases.

An Early Clair Film

The Academy, Oxford Street, are showing, for a week from next Sunday, Réné Clair's charming silent comedy *The Italian Straw Hat* after the comedy of Labiche. This film had considerable success when it was shown a few years ago at the Shaftesbury Cinema, but the celebrity brought to M. Clair by the subsequent success of *Sous les Toits de Paris* and *Le Million* will, no doubt bring a lot of new people to the Academy to see this early work. More clearly than in his later films, we see the enormous debt of M. Clair to Mr. Chaplin. Though *The Italian Straw Hat* is an adaptation of a popular play, M. Clair has succeeded perfectly in reinterpreting it in terms of the movie, and our pleasure is never hampered by the consciousness that we are looking at the film version of a stage play. The grotesque clothes and domestic decoration, presumably of the late '80's or early '90's are a charming feature of this most amusing comedy, which goes with a happy ironical swing from first to last, and is "Parisian" and shabby in the extreme. It is a witty, intelligent and unpretentious picture, that should appeal to everybody. The captions are in English and no knowledge of French is necessary in order to enjoy *The Italian Straw Hat*.

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Saturday, November 7th—

Rugby Football, Combined Services *v.* S. Africans, Twickenham.

Sunday, November 8th—

S. K. Ratcliffe on "The Religion of Communism," Conway Hall, 11.

Moiseiwitsch, Chopin Recital, Palladium, 3.15.

"Bluestone Quarry," by C. K. Munro, Duchess Theatre.

"Tristi Amori," by Giuseppe Giacosa, Everyman Theatre.

"A' Hunting We Will Go," by Phyllis Morris, Savoy Theatre.

"Miss Rose's Girl," by Mrs. Trimble Bradley, Garrick Theatre.

Monday, November 9th—

London Symphony Orchestra, Queen's Hall, 8.15.

Public meeting in support of International Limitation of Armaments, Organised by the League of Nations Union, Kensington Town Hall, 8.30.

Tuesday, November 10th—

"Britannia of Billingsgate," by Christine Jope-Slade and Sewell Stokes, Embassy Theatre.

Miss Mary Chamot on "French Art," Victoria and Albert Museum, 3.

Dr. Percy Dearmer on "Sculpture, 1140-1250," King's College, 5.30.

C. E. M. Joad on "Samuel Butler" Morley College, 8.

Thursday, November 12th—

S. K. Ratcliffe on "The Russian Experiment," Kingsway Hall, 8.30.

Professor H. J. Laski on "Alexis de Tocqueville and Democracy," King's College, 5.15.

Friday, November 13th—

Maurice Brockwell on "An Introduction to French Painting" British Academy, Burlington Gardens, 5.

Professor Oliver Elton on "Elizabethan Lyric," Birkbeck College, 5.30.

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PAST AND PRESENT

NO wonder Drury Lane is packed every night! *Cavalcade* is an amazing spectacular-emotional-historical entertainment. It has all the elements of a prolonged popular success. It is ingenious, sentimental, patriotic—modern in method, old-fashioned in pathos. If one is middle aged, the tunes and costumes make one recall one's youth with a sort of bemused astonishment. What vague memories, perhaps not all worth remembering but dear to one, those silly excellent old tunes at once stir up again! And did the women one fell in love with look like that? They did, they did. And were the naughtiest entertainments quite so homely, quite so flat and arch? They were. Here the elderly man-about-town already feels he may soon be compelled, in spite of laughing, to use his handkerchief; and I, too, though I was never one of them, anticipate that it will not be at all difficult to lead me presently to the fountain of easy tears. What a world! More familiar to me than the modern world, about which I do not know my way nearly so well, and yet one which has become strange to me—a festive, clumsy, confident, philistine, safe, prosperous world, with all sorts of delicate things in it and quantities of things, good and bad, comfortably taken for granted. It is odd (of course it is a delusion of age), but, looking back, London at the beginning of the Boer War seems actually young and sunlit. Can this, then, be the world which to the young radical seemed sinister and rotten? Such is the undertone of interest for the elderly of either sort.

While for the young *Cavalcade* has the interest that a picture of conditions which preceded them must have for each generation in turn. It inspires in them that god-like feeling of irony, of knowing what is to come. The young can excuse the old-fashioned sentiment of some scenes as merely historical (it is not; but they can interpret it thus—till the last tableau), while there is some sentiment in *Cavalcade* thoroughly after their taste. (You know the young, though they are down on sentiment in general and shrink from pathos, reck themselves with one peculiar form of it: they are broken-hearted because they have no hearts.) The syncopated despair of the song "It's Got Me Down" in the modern night-club scene, and it is beautifully sung, will disturb them as much as the farewells to soldier-sons disturb their elders in the audience.

In case what I have just written suggests that I think pathos illegitimate appeal, let me hasten to say that I hold no such nonsensical notion. Nearly all great authors, dramatists and novelists have revelled in pathos. One of the drawbacks from which the modern author suffers is that he addresses a public the cleverer portion of which think it vulgar to weep. The pathos of *Cavalcade* is legitimate and popular and often admirable—though the last tableau was too thick for me. It left me cold. Yet pathos is a particularly valuable ingredient in such an entertainment. In the first place, the theme itself is pathetic: time, change and the passing of the old and the chaos of the present. The present, by the by, is always chaotic to those living in it, and, in the second, the melting mood disposes us to enjoy like children suprisingly gorgeous stage spectacles. These great tableaux are, of course, *the* feature of *Cavalcade*. I have seen nothing to equal them in their own line on the stage. An enormous amount of ingenuity has gone to the arranging of them, and they are striking without being commonplace—except perhaps the huge party at Stafford House. What I admired apart from their realistic animated effects was their dramatic usefulness, the illuminating part they play in this long story of two generations.

The technical problem Mr. Noel Coward set himself was to tell the story of the vast changes during the last thirty years, by addressing us alternately through our eyes and our ears. The eye takes in atmosphere at a glance—it is a change in moral atmospheres which is the staple interest. The tableau is the quickest way. But it is only through speech that we can gauge the effect of these changes on human feeling and character. Therefore the spoken drama and the visual drama must supplement each other. Here he shows astonishing skill. The speaking scenes are brief. We follow the lives of one household, drawing-room and basement, throughout, and the effect of the two wars on those upstairs and below. Meanwhile the series of tableaux make themselves emotional chords or contrasts. For instance, the merry tableau representing the embarkation of the troops to South Africa to the strain of "Soldiers of the Queen" contrasts with the sombre scenes of departure during the last war.

One of the most ingenious and macabre effects, ingenious because it conveys so much in so short a space of time, is the tableau of the endless, clay-coloured, steel-hatted soldiers zig-zagging past at the back of the stage while in the front three women music-hall performers sing snatches of recruiting songs. At first light-heartedly, but as the procession drags on and on to the dreary yearning tune of "Tipperary," they change into pale, gaunt, haggard women with staring eyes and jerky gestures, though continuing to yell the same empty cheery exhortations. All the history of propaganda at home during the war is thus presented to us in one scene. Æsthetically the most striking tableau was that of the effect of Queen Victoria's death, and as a triumph of technical skill, the one representing the chaos of the present was the best.

The acting of the principal characters is admirable throughout, and Mr. Noel Coward, as producer, has been careful to keep it down to a quiet realistic level. The pervading sentiment is pacifist, and it is for that reason that the close of the whole performance jarred on my mind. The principal woman character, who, during all the changes is admirably interpreted by Miss Mary Clare, drinks the health of the future of England, with the Union Jack as a background. It is patriotic in the dangerous sense. DESMOND MACCARTHY.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ON 9th November, 1721, Miss W. Molesworth wrote from London to her brother John, and asked, "I don't know whether you are at all acquainted with Mr. Tickell, if you be not, I am sure you would be extremely pleased to be so, as he is one of the prettiest gentlemen we have, not to speak of him as a poet, wherein, if I be not mistaken, he will make as great a figure as any of his contemporaries. He has more of the inventive part (which I take to be the essential of a poet) than any of them; as for the rest, bating descriptions, it is only a parcel of fine sonorous words ranged in a regular order, and is comprehended in the word versification." I wish Mr. Eustace Tickell, in his life of his ancestor—*Thomas Tickell*, 1685–1740 (Constable, 16s.)—when he quotes this letter had given us the ingenuous correspondent's age. Her judgment of Tickell's poetry is something suspect from her very odd idea of poetry's nature; but anyway, I suspect her liking for it was mainly due to the fact that Mr. Tickell was a "pretty gentleman." Great poets are apt rather to be ugly customers; but in Tickell's day the Muse was pursued politely and with a modish attention that produced some odd poetry if at the same time many estimable persons were persuaded to a harmless intellectual exercise. One stanza of Tickell's *Colin and Lucy* is, I suppose, still familiar, though it is often misquoted.

> I hear the voice you cannot hear
> That cries I must not stay;
> I see the hand you cannot see
> That beckons me away.

And some of us remember that Dr. Johnson, in his majestic, decisive manner, declared of Tickell's elegy on Joseph Addison, "nor is there a more elegant funeral poem to be found in the whole compass of English literature."

* * *

Mr. Eustace Tickell's book is of a kind that is now deplorably out of fashion. He allows the documents, the letters and the facts that he has assembled to speak for themselves; and a reader with a little sympathic intelligence and historical sense can soon lose himself in the book, and believe himself to be revelling with Thomas Tickell, in Oxford, in London, and in Dublin. Mr. Eustace Tickell has been most modestly self-effacing, and is at no pains to be smart or pretentious at the expense of his ancestors and their friends. Occasionally his manner errs on the side of severity; and some of the miscellaneous information in the book would have been more suitably relegated to notes or appendices. No student of eighteenth-century literature, however, can fail to find delight in this volume, where even the familiar things gain from their domestic setting, and where there is a good deal that has been hitherto unprinted. Nor is the interest of the book merely literary; there is plenty here for the student of human nature, especially in the letters of Edward Young (letters about Advancement, not about Night) and in the enchanting letters of old Mrs. Tickell, Thomas's mother, who when near eighty years old still took, in her remote Cumberland home, an interest in the Court fashions. This is a rich book.

* * *

Miss Molesworth was right in thinking of Tickell as one of the prettiest gentlemen they had. No one could read this book without liking him. In an age of place-hunters and back-biters, he hunted for his place with real consideration, had a genuine love for his patron, Addison, and so far as the evidence goes, bit no man's back. Addison's partiality for him made Dick Steele jealous; but Steele had only his own casual self to thank if Addison preferred a rather more trustworthy executor, and Tickell dealt with that cunning gentleman Tonson in a way that Steele could never have contrived. Few men of his time aroused so little enmity; and it is evident from this record that such sterling good nature as Tickell's, combined with but moderate talents, compelled liking even in a world where one's own advancement seemed always to mean the deposition of another. Tickell had one talent—he knew when to resign. He learnt that early. He was a good scholar, and was asked by Tonson to translate the Iliad. A formal agreement was signed, and Mr. Eustace Tickell successfully disproves the old scandal that this was a plot of Addison's against Pope, who was pledged to do the Iliad for Lintot. Still, the knowledge of Pope's enterprise soon came to Tickell, and he never translated more than the first book of the Iliad. In a very acute criticism—unprinted before—Tickell compares his version with Pope's. His essay is one of the fairest "self-reviews" I have ever read. He is right in preferring his own rendering of the line

> βῆ δ' ακέων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης

Pope translates it:

> Disconsolate, nor daring to complain,
> Silent he wandered by the sounding Main,

while Tickell's version is

> Silent he pass'd amid the deaf'ning Roar
> Of tumbling billows on the lonely Shore.

Take this as an instance of Tickell's pleasant manner:

> When I began to read these Translations of the Iliad, I was impatient to see how νεφεληγερέτης or *the Raiser of Clouds* was translated. I could never be satisfied with *Cloud-Compeller*, which really conveys no Idea to an English Reader. This I was the more curious to learn, because the whole philosophy of Thunder is couched in this Epithet. According to every opinion Mr. T. has given us a most sublime Interpretation:
>
> To whom the God, Whose Hand the Tempest forms,
> Drives Clouds on Clouds and blackens Heav'n with Storms,
> Thus wrathful answer'd:
>
> Mr. P. translates it thus:
>
> She said, and sighing thus the God replies
> Who rolls the Thunder o'er the vaulted Skies.
>
> Which, in my humble opinion, is a mean, unphilosophical Translation, and seems borrowed from the Play-house, where the Tragicall Engineer makes Thunder by rolling a large Mustard-ball over the cieling.

* * *

Tickell was an excellent example of a man who cultivated the Muses on a little Civil Service job. He was Secretary of State under Addison, and after Addison's death he went to Ireland as Chief Secretary at Dublin Castle. Here Swift grew fond of him and later of the Irish wife Tickell married; he was besieged by letters from Young, asking for preferment. Of all the letters in the book, except, perhaps, Swift's, I prefer old Mrs. Tickell's; and cannot resist the quoting of some of her choicer passages. She was nearly eighty years old when she died in 1729. Twelve years before she tells her son of new arrivals at Whitehaven:

> We have Mr. Lampton and his ffamily com from London and along with yon a figne brisk phesicion and a figne Maid they are Roman Catholics but appear very well at a distance. I suppose we must not converse with ym, which I'm sorry for because they seem well bred people.

She suffered through another son's speculations in the South Sea business:

> I can by no means understand these South Sea affaires . . . I'm resolved to desist from unnecessary expense. Clothes I have sufficient for my spann of life. . . .

She finds time drag on her hands, and asks:

> Have you nobody's speaches or addresses Plays Poems etc. Tis so dull a tyme with me as is scarce supportable.

And in the year before her death she writes: "I seldom stir out of my Room, but the Church, and Nusepapers, tho' very empty, are my greatest entertainment." Is there anything in the papers? The answer is, "Yes, always, if they are old enough." Mr. Eustace Tickell deserves our gratitude for his researches into his family archives; for here, from yet another angle, we get a view of that small, compact Augustan world, where men of wit were at home; distances were longer then, but the benefit of a common culture, shared by all educated people, made European society seem at once more cosy and more civilised.

RICHARD SUNNE.

NEW NOVELS

How Like a God. By REX STOUT. Morley and Mitchell Kennerley. 7s. 6d.

American Beauty. By EDNA FERBER. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Volcano. By AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Russia in the Name of God. By VLADIMIR BRENNER. Sidgwick and Jackson. 7s. 6d.

The Messenger of the Snow. By FERDYNAND GOETEL. Mathews and Marrot. 7s. 6d.

The disadvantage of all forms of literary realism is that one cannot forget their artificial basis. Take Joyce's "interior monologue." In essence it is as artificial as the stage soliloquy; while the air of artifice is heightened, rather than diminished, by a "realism" which persuades the eye but not the intellect. Everybody thinks in detail like Mr. Bloom, or everybody *has* thought, for some few seconds; and yet the sluggish stream of the hero's musings bears no relation to what we have learned of our own processes. True in detail, it is fallacious in effect, and only differs from the conventions which have preceded it in so far as it is considerably more redundant. It is a convention, but, once admitted to be such, there is no reason why it should not be employed. Mr. Stout, who has adopted it for his new novel, must surely have had an eye to its limitations. Here a ramshackle realistic framework is redeemed by a bold neglect of probability.

The protagonist "re-lives" his entire life as he walks slowly upstairs to commit a murder. Are existences re-lived in that fashion? One is doubtful. Certainly not in any form which can be translated intelligibly into black-and-white. Our past lives are implicit in every action; but implicit they usually remain. . . . On the other hand, it is the peculiar strength of literature to render these objections quite meaningless. The ultimate triumph or failure of the book is not in the writer's stars but in himself. Thus, seen from the point of view of the astrologer, Mr. Stout's project was inauspicious; but his qualities have risen superior to his designs and carry us along with them as on the wings of a good movie.

His method, then, is cinematographic; and, just as the cinema is much freer than the stage—since its continuity is not bounded by place and time, but can make connections both with the past and with the future, presenting visually memories and desires—his narrative ranges ceaselessly backwards and forwards, now illuminating an incident of childhood, now selecting a scrap of recent history, as William Sidney, a revolver in his pocket, goes wobbling upstairs towards his doom. With photographic bleakness and rapidity Mr. Stout heaps episode upon episode. His presentment, like the camera's, is two-dimensional; it has no colour, very little depth. . . . But it flickers on and the chief character emerges—a sort of Oblomov, born in modern America, conscious as painfully of his own void, though disguised in all the trappings of Big Business. Readers who know Goncharov's great book will remember a sentence towards the end in which the hero gives the keynote to his tragedy: "There has never been a flame burning in my life, either to save or to destroy it. . . ." William Sidney might have echoed that complaint; for it is the burden of the story which he re-lives. What the Russian was too indolent to conceal, the American was too shamefaced to acknowledge. He had taken refuge from the ache of inner emptiness behind a façade of affluence and responsibility.

Altogether this book can be recommended, in spite of certain irritating tricks—the use of the second person throughout, shoddily popularised by the egregious author of *Schoolgirl*—as better reading than most novels which come one's way. It represents the more hopeful side of American fiction; whereas *American Beauty* represents, if not the worst, at any rate the heavier and more conservative. It is good Ferber; but there one must stop short and allow the dust-cover to give its efficient summary: "This is the story of red-faced young Polacks with strong, quick ankles and sinews rippling under their sweaty shirts, possessing the land with a passion too strong for the vinegar-blooded descendants of the *Mayflower*. . . ." Well, well; it is also a capable piece of work and may be handed over uncritically to those readers who like their slice of life rather solid and have no aversion from cold pudding upon week-days. A millionaire returns to his native village, where he is bewildered by the strong ankles of sweaty Polacks. Recipe and result are both orthodox, and a reviewer can only bow his head or perhaps parody the motto of a defunct statesman: "Let Ferber hold what Ferber held"—and there will still be something left for younger novelists.

The distance between modern Russia and modern America is less considerable than it would appear at first sight. They are extremes which now touch at many points; for Oblomov, they tell us, has passed away or sips his tea in the obscurity of exile, and *nichevo* has dropped out of the spoken language. Machinery may not thrive under Russian management, the life of the American tractor may be short; but these mechanical monsters have begun to breed. . . . All the difficulty and awkwardness of the transition is dealt with by Mrs. Williams-Ellis. Here again one feels the influence of the cinema, and to some extent of Russian film-technique. *Volcano*, a collection of short stories, abounds in the clever glimpses and quick transitions which Russian directors are so ingenious at contriving, in the abrupt ironic contrast of different worlds. . . . First, the abortive revolt of 1905, observed through the eyes of an old Englishwoman who was staying in the country with Russian friends; next the murder of Rasputin, Court intrigue; scenes of fraternisation at the Front; then civil war, famine, the coal shortage—envisaged in a series of rapid pictures which, though none of them particularly memorable, build up as the continuous record of a great change, in which propaganda is nicely subordinated to the slow, effective movement of the whole.

Mrs. Williams-Ellis has succeeded in conveying the crude immensity of the transition which is taking place. Fully to appreciate that drama one should have visited, however casually, its stage, leaving behind in the dusty streets of Harbin the engaging pathetic débris of an older world—fragments from the Russian literature one knows, white-whiskered gentlemen in silk tunics, and blonde, graceful girls in flowery groups—then crossing the militant frontier beyond which is guarded by types physically so different, grim self-conscious pillars of a new society, curtly tolerant of the wandering bourgeois in their midst. Two novels, both of some merit, *Russia in the Name of God*, by Vladimir Brenner, and *The Messenger of the Snow*, by Ferdynand Goetel, translated from the German and the Polish, bring back various stages along the line. As one reads *Russia in the Name of God*, one remembers the glittering domes of a distant monastery or a painted church soaring from a wooden village. Some cupolas keep their crosses to this day; some mark workers' clubs or Museums of Atheism. The huge cathedral, built to celebrate Napoleon's defeat, stands in a circle of dismal hoardings and awaits the signal to be blown up; a charming and fantastic little nunnery, almost vegetable in the exuberance of its architecture, has been converted into a repository of "godless" objects. . . . *The Messenger of the Snow* brings one to the Polish frontier and to the flat marches, lately fought across by White and Red. Here Europe, with emphatic tidiness, still begins. The bourgeois tourist hurries to the restaurant car and accepts the benison of clean tablecloths and decent food.

PETER QUENNELL.

THE SACRIFICED RUSSIANS

The World Crisis: The Eastern Front. By THE RIGHT HON. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL. Butterworth. 30s.

One may not agree with Mr. Churchill's views on finance or India or any other political questions, but all must admire his courage and energy. What courage it required to attack such a subject as this! What energy to carry through so vast and dismal an undertaking! Even students of the war are tempted to turn aside from the contemplation of the Russian front. Nearly all attention has been directed to the long line of warfare from Dunkirk to the Swiss frontier. Brilliant or tragic but fairly comprehensible episodes are suggested by the words, the Dardanelles, "Mespot," Caporetto, and Palestine; but to venture into the history of the fighting from the Niemen down to Salonika is like advancing into an impenetrable forest or into a slushy bog where one wallows in vain. Yet Mr. Churchill has ventured, and the result of his daring is one of the finest and most needed volumes on the Great War.

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Volcano Short Stories. — AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS

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JONATHAN CAPE THIRTY BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON

marked only by scattered towns of which the name of Warsaw was probably the only one familiar, and inhabitated by peasant races "speaking no human tongue," as I once heard a Turk say of an Englishman. To and fro across this almost unknown wilderness we see unnumbered swarms of Russians, Germans, Austrians, and Poles trampling, advancing, retreating, hungry, exhausted, submerged by whole battalions in bogs, scorched by heat, frozen to death, and all engaged upon the solemn duty of slaughtering each other by thousands a day. In the battle of Lodz we read that the loss of the two armies combined came to 100,000 killed and wounded. We read that Brusilov's gallant but hopeless attempt in the Southern theatre (1916)—the last serious effort of which Russia was capable—cost his country 350,000 men before his front was stabilised, and little less than a million before it ended :

> The Russian Generals strove to make flesh and blood achieve the purposes of artillery. Wire entanglements, which there were no shells to cut, were traversed upon the heaps of dead which the German machine-guns piled upon them. This profusion in the commanders was equalled by the devotion of their troops.

It was equalled, but there is a limit even to Russian endurance, and within a few months these troops made an end of generals, dynasty, Government, and all. What that end implied is told by Mr. Churchill in a few characteristic lines :

> In fact, once the Czar was gone, no Russian ever commanded again. It was not until a fearsome set of internationalists and logicians built a sub-human structure upon the ruins of Christian civilisation that any form of order or design again emerged.

But, for all except military students, the most interesting chapters in a volume full of interest will probably be the first. For in them, with great skill and knowledge, the author traces the origins of the war which has shaken Europe's faith in civilisation, religion, and humanity, besides destroying the three greatest Empires. His story rightly begins with Austria's annexation of Bosnia, and, indeed, it was obvious at the time to all who knew the Balkans that war was then foretold. After brilliant portraits of the aged Emperor Francis Joseph, Aerenthal, Conrad von Hötzendorf, and other leading Austrians of the time, Mr. Churchill traces the sinister advance of European destiny step by step—the rivalry in dreadnoughts, the appearance of the *Panther* at Agadir, the Italian invasion of Tripoli, the war of the Balkan League, the treachery of Serbia, Greece, and Roumania towards Bulgaria, the shameless Treaty of Bucharest, the refusal of the Kaiser to aid Austria against Russia and Serbia in 1913, the fore-knowledge, if not the instigation, of the Serajevo murders by members of the Serbian Government, and the consequent, not unnatural resolve of Austria to destroy her pernicious neighbour. Then followed the hesitation of Kaiser and Czar, both sincerely unwilling to doom millions of their peoples to death, and we see again how their scruples were overcome by the lies of their Ministers in St. Petersburg and Vienna.

The causes of the war lay deep in racial hatreds, Imperialist greed, and dynastic ambitions, but, as Mr. Churchill says, the flash which lighted the explosion was kindled by three men—the man who committed the actual murder of the Archduke and Duchess (it was Princep, lately honoured by Serbia as being the benefactor who caused the war and gained for his country an enormous increase of territory as the reward of evil) ; Tschirschky, the German Ambassador in Vienna, who falsely assured Austria of the Kaiser's support in case of war with Serbia ; and Berchtold, who secretly launched the fatal ultimatum to Serbia in order to ensure the fulfilment of his private desire for Serbia's destruction. I may quote the description of Count Berchtold, for it was he who declared war on Serbia (July 28th), though the Kaiser was still considering that Serbia's answer to the Ultimatum (treacherously delayed in reaching him) was sufficient :

> Fop, dandy, la-di-da ; amiable, polite, and curiously unself-seeking ; immensely rich ; magnate of a noble house ; *habitué* of the Turf and of the Clubs ; unproved in any grave political issue ; yet equipped with the all-too-intensive training of a chess-board diplomatist, thus conditioned Berchtold fell an easy prey. He was allured by the glamour and force of the military men, and fascinated by the rattle and glitter of their terrible machines. We are appalled that from such lips should have issued commands more fateful to the material fortunes of mankind than any spoken by the greatest sovereigns, warriors, jurists, philsosophers, and statesmen of the past.

Such was the man who, more definitely than any other, caused the outbreak of the war. When once he had declared war, nothing could check the course of atrocious events. As Mr. Churchill says in his most trenchant manner : "A situation had been created where hundreds of officials had only to do their prescribed duty to their respective countries to wreck the world. They did their duty."

With the help of numerous military plans and a general map of the whole front, we may at last follow the course of the campaigns on all the Eastern regions, and it is a hideous story of human sacrifice. To most readers probably the most interesting of those chapters will be those telling of the vast German victory of Tannenberg ; for it was that which brought Hindenburg to his present high position in Germany. He was already a veteran when, by a stroke of genius, the younger Moltke selected him to join with Ludendorff in command of the Eastern front. He had been at Sadowa in 1866, and at Mars-la-Tour in 1870. But he was a fine, trustworthy type of the old Prussian officer, and, best of all, he knew the region of the marshes and Masurian lakes from boyhood. There he destroyed Samsonov's huge but wearied army, and drove their Commander-in-Chief to suicide. Mr. Churchill gives the glory mainly to General von François, but the almost universal estimate of Hindenburg's service, together with Ludendorff's, is probably right. He and Ludendorff were then so closely united that Mr. Churchill uses a dipthong of their initials to indicate the command.

There are many other points upon which one would like to dwell. Mr. Churchill, as the originator of the Dardanelles attempt, and as First Lord of the Admiralty at the time, naturally touches upon that gallant enterprise, and blames the fleet for not renewing its endeavour to force the passage. His disappointment is uttered in a cry of personal despair :

> The Admiralty and Generals had their way. The fleet continued idle at the Dardanelles. The armies shattered themselves against the German defence in France. The Bulgarians carried an army of 300,000 men to join our enemies ; and Serbia as a factor in the war was obliterated. I found it unendurable to remain participant in such crimes against truth and reason.

One can understand the feelings of the man who originated the most brilliant stroke of strategy on our side in the war and then saw it frittered away for want of support. In this remarkable volume he has his revenge, but he says little about it, and I think the above is his only complaint. H. W. NEVINSON.

FRENCH POLITICAL THOUGHT

French Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century. By ROGER SOLTAU. Benn. 21s.

This book is in the same series as Mr. Kingsley Martin's *French Liberal Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, and in many ways forms an admirable companion and continuation to it. Mr. Soltau had the more difficult task and period and it is hardly surprising that one could, if one wanted to, pick holes here and there in his work. It is really much more surprising that the holes are so few and comparatively small. If you look at the index to Mr. Martin's or any other volume on French political thought in the eighteenth century, you see a few great names standing out from all the others—Diderot, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Voltaire—with one or two lesser peaks in men like Condorcet and Helvétius. This is country which many have explored and all the peaks have been climbed. There are no more discoveries to be made and the contours are everywhere vast and simple. I do not mean that there are no difficulties in the path of one who writes about eighteenth-century political thought, but the difficulties are not in the material but in the historical interpretation.

For Mr. Soltau, on the other hand, there were difficulties everywhere. In the eighteenth century there was a comparatively simple and clear-cut conflict between two systems of political ideas representing two different ideals of civilisation and society. On one side stood the *ancien régime*, on the other *les philosophes*. In the nineteenth century there is not one conflict but many. Here we have democracy still at grips with the *ancien régime*, socialism with capitalism, syndicalism with reformist socialism, republicanism with monarchism, laicism with clericalism, internationalism with nationalism. This jungle of conflicting "isms" is, of course, only the intellectual reflection of the political and economic confusion into which European society drifted in the nineteenth century. But it makes the task of an investigator of nineteenth-century political thought, like Mr. Soltau, terribly difficult. Here there is nothing simple. There are no giants like Montesquieu and Voltaire, in whose

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political thought you can study and trace the thought and evolution of an era. There are great or well-known names, no doubt, Saint-Simon, Proudhon, and Fourier; Taine and Renan; Comte; de Tocqueville; Anatole France. Merely to name the names is enough to show Mr. Soltau's difficulties. Everyone knows where Voltaire stood. But where does Renan stand or a writer like Charles Péguy? Does Renan stand with the revolutionaries or the anti-revolutionaries, with the democrat or the authoritarian? The question is not easy to answer. Mr. Soltau often asks similar questions about the other leaders of French political thought and again and again is forced to hesitate over the answer. The hesitation is significant, and it is significant too that he sees in Péguy "even more than in Anatole France, the real antithesis to Maurras, and this in spite of the fact that some have gone to Maurras through Péguy." No one in the eighteenth century went through Voltaire to Voltaire's antithesis or through Tom Paine to Burke.

Mr. Soltau has made a brave and partially successful attempt to cope with these difficulties. The general scheme of his exposition is chronological, being divided into three books covering the periods 1814–1848, 1848–1875, and 1875–1914. The first he suggests is concerned with "forms of government," the second with "the reassertions of authority," and the third he simply labels "the Republican" era. Political thinkers whose work falls mainly within one of his periods are grouped together by him according to the "tendency" of their thought, as for instance Comte, Renan, and Taine in a single chapter with the title "The Authority of Science."

Mr. Soltau has many merits. His reading has been very wide and his knowledge of the period and of its political thought is remarkable. His interpretations and exposition are clear and intelligent, and because he himself finds his subject of great interest, he makes it interesting. His own political thought shines through, but he succeeds in maintaining a necessary impartiality and he has the rare tact not to express his own opinion unless it is really relevant. It is better that a writer should leave us in doubt about his opinion than bored with knowing it. All these good qualities make Mr. Soltau's book valuable to anyone interested in the development of political ideas and of European society. It is full of facts which the English reader will not find elsewhere and gives a view of French history and French thought which will probably be new to many.

Only one criticism may be usefully advanced here, and that not dogmatic. It is questionable whether Mr. Soltau's chronological arrangement in three periods has not added to his difficulties. One feels that the clue to nineteenth-century political thought may really lie in those wider conflicts to which Mr. Soltau of course often refers, the old conflict between democracy and authority and the new conflicts between socialism and political democracy and between nationalism and internationalism. Mr. Soltau's arrangement requires him to treat Saint-Simon and Fourier in a chapter of Book I, Proudhon in a chapter of Book II, Jaurès in a section of one chapter of Book III and Sorel in a section of another chapter of the same book. The connection of thought between these thinkers is stronger and more real, it seems to me, than the differences in the dates of their births and deaths, which have led Mr. Soltau to treat them in different sections of his book.

LEONARD WOOLF.

ASPECTS OF ENGLAND

Maid in Waiting. By JOHN GALSWORTHY. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Mr. and Mrs. Pennington. By F. BRETT YOUNG. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

The Night Visitor. By ARNOLD BENNETT. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Galsworthy and Mr. Brett Young, though they write of very different Englands, both give the impression that they share with their characters the belief that man has a right to certainty, to security. Mr. Bennett, in his short stories, never pictures for his people, nor seems to ask for himself, anything but adventure. The result is that, of these three books, his, slight in texture as are most of its contents, seems much the most vital and vivid; Mr. Galsworthy's irony, so perfect in his earlier studies of the established Englishman, here seems to lapse into acceptance; and Mr. Brett Young's portrayal of middle-class struggle, in spite of its end, has an air of despondency. *Maid in Waiting* is a tale of injustice to the ruling classes—the Cherwells, who are what England used to be. Herbert Cherwell has killed a Bolivian in Bolivia in self-defence. Castro used a knife on recalcitrant mules, and no Englishman can ill-treat animals, except hares, foxes, badgers, otters, deer and rabbits. What is to happen to Herbert? It says much for Mr. Galsworthy's skill that he does succeed in making us pay attention to this problem, and to the efforts of various relatives and friends of Herbert Cherwell to save him from extradition. The story has vivid incidents, and much typical comment; but, as we say, Mr. Galsworthy's irony seems to fail him, and he is in danger of appearing to accept the standards of that old world which judges from his school. There is a little play about a schooltie in *Mr. and Mrs. Pennington*, but Dick Pennington's Brunstone would mean nothing to Mr. Galsworthy's Etonians, nor is Pennington's school any "use" to him. Mr. Brett Young tells with skill, only at far too great length, the early years of the Penningtons' married life; the whole long book would have been better as a short story, for Mr. Brett Young's bold colour and bold characters are rather faded, and do not justify the space he gives them in his Midlands' melodrama. Susan Lorimer, who marries Dick, is an early study in a very cheap type; no doubt it, as perhaps all types, has profundities for the artist, but Mr. Brett Young does not disclose them, though possibly one's impatience with her is increased by the publishers' ludicrous claim that she is an English Madame Bovary, and that Mr. Brett Young is a greater novelist than Flaubert. (Why do authors allow their publishers to make fools of them in this way?) When Dick is arrested for murder the story quickens in interest and reality, and the last hundred pages are moving and have more validity than any other part of the book. Mr. Brett Young has a talent for melodrama that he has never properly explored. There was no side of his genius that Mr. Arnold Bennett did not explore; and this book of stories is full of characteristic things. Some of the tales use material that he found superfluous for *Imperial Palace;* some are little more than exercises in virtuosity; some exhibit that confidence and clarity in construction which had taken the place of the author's early cocksureness and apparent contempt. That Bennett ever despised anything in anyone it is hard for those who knew him to believe. Fundamentally he could not find anything in human nature that was not of exciting interest to him; there were certain things he never found at all, good things and bad things. It is doubtful if he understood cruelty; it is evident that he did not understand some varieties of the imaginative life. But how many things there were he did understand! How many people he saw happily, whimsically, with that shrewd, personal, critical intelligence that is shown again and again in these tales.

VIOLENCE IN U.S.A.

Dynamite. By LOUIS ADAMIC. With a foreword by S. K. RATCLIFFE. Cape. 10s. 6d.

Although dully and awkwardly written, this is an important book. It is the best exposition that has yet been made of one of the chief reasons for the reign of the gangster, and of racketeering, in the United States. The whole world is familiar with the relation between Prohibition and the racketeer; but few people know of the close connection between the story of class violence in America and the present failure of law and order. Mr. Adamic, a young Jugoslavian working-man who emigrated to the United States in 1913, shows this connection clearly, and in doing so he makes a useful contribution to history.

At first view the story of American Labour seems strangely uneventful, and almost conservative. This is because Labour has never been politically powerful in the United States, owing to the lack of solidarity between the well-organised skilled labourers—who are mostly native Americans—and the great mass of unskilled workers who have always been recruited from the most recent group of immigrants, and who have therefore been looked down upon, sometimes with hatred, by the aristocrats of the Labour world. This fatal lack of unity has prevented a Labour movement in American politics; but it has not prevented a steady and sinister struggle, marked by astonishing outbursts of violence, between the employers and the labourers—especially the ill-organised lower class of labourers. It is this struggle which helped to prepare the way for the modern racketeer; and the employers who first appealed to violence are receiving their reward to-day in a reign of terror which threatens society.

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third of the nineteenth century—for employers to deal with isolated strikes by means of armed guards and so-called "private detectives"—who were frequently nothing but city gangsters hired to intimidate the strikers. Naturally, this led to retaliation, and, beginning with the Molly Maguire movement among the miners in the 'seventies and continuing through the long-drawn-out private war in the Colorado coalfields in 1913-14, Labour made a series of unsuccessful efforts to meet violence by violence. The efforts were never openly endorsed by such respectable bodies as the American Federation of Labour—though Mr. Adamic proves beyond a doubt that the A. F. of L. often gave unofficial support to dynamitings—and the efforts always failed, for the employers were in the unique position of being able to appeal to the courts, and even to the army, in case their private violence proved insufficient. But then, after the outbreak of brutality by the police and by the "private detectives" during the great steel strike of 1919, there came a turn of the tide. Labour appeared to realise that it would always be beaten if it opposed its amateur violence to the professionals who were hired by the employers. So Labour itself turned to the professionals, and there began an alliance between the Trade Unions and the gangsters—an alliance whose full evil has not even yet been realised. The Trade Unions are becoming the slaves of their defenders. The gangsters, after being hired for a few special jobs, began to offer "steady protection" to their employers—and that is not an offer which it is safe to refuse in contemporary America. As long ago as 1922-23 Unions in Chicago and New York were passing, in this manner, into the power of gang leaders. Such was the beginning of the "protection racket," which has grown to such alarming proportions during the past few years. And such is the final development from the employers' use of hired assassins at the time of the Ludlow Massacre in Colorado in 1914.

WAYLAND SMITH IN SUSSEX

Wealden Iron. By ERNEST STRAKER. Bell. 15s.

The once-famous iron industry of Sussex began before Roman times, and had almost certainly a continuous existence from its beginning to little more than a century ago. In this attractive book Mr. Ernest Straker has collected together practically all that is known about it, including a great deal that is the fruit of his own wanderings over the county. He has been tireless in identifying the sites of abandoned bloomeries, furnaces and forges, and in assigning to them, from the scanty remains available, their approximate dates and classifications. He has searched written records, published and unpublished, and gathered together the gleanings of many earlier students. And yet, important as Sussex iron was for centuries in the economic life of England, how little we know about it even now, despite the assiduous labours of Mr. Straker and his forerunners.

We know indeed that from the sixteenth century to the eighteenth the Sussex iron industry flourished on the production of munitions of war. Cannon and cannon balls were its chief products; and after them the famous fire-bricks for which modern collectors search so avidly. Those of us who study economic history at all know too that for centuries there was violent controversy about the social and economic effects of the working of iron in the weald. It was alleged again and again that the iron industry was denuding England of its timber, that soon, unless the use of charcoal for making iron was put down, there would be no timber left for shipbuilding, and that other timber-using industries would be deprived of their indispensable raw materials and their supply of fuel. The felling of trees for iron-making was repeatedly forbidden by law; and probably most people believe, even to-day, that the Sussex iron trade was brought to an untimely end by the exhaustion of the timber supply even in face of the attempts to regulate its use.

In fact, however, the effect of the iron trade on the supply of timber was greatly exaggerated by contemporaries, often from interested motives; and neither exhaustion of timber supplies nor prohibition of felling had much to do with the decay of the industry. It was the use of coal in the making of iron, far more than the exhaustion of the woodlands, that killed the Sussex iron manufacture; and, as a matter of fact, the use of charcoal had little effect on the big timbers that were needed for shipbuilding, as charcoal was made mainly of small wood from copses. Sussex iron could have maintained itself long after it actually fell into disuse, and could have done so without any adverse effect on shipbuilding, if technical changes in the production of iron had not altered the geographical location of the industry.

Sussex iron production was falling long before the end of the eighteenth century. But over the two thousand years before then it holds up a mirror to the history of man as a metal-using animal. For most of this long time the typical industrial establishment was the bloomery, still in being among primitive peoples, wherein wrought iron was made by direct process on a small scale and with only the simplest appliances. But from Tudor times the bloomery was rapidly superseded by furnace and forge—the new indirect method of making iron in two successive processes, probably first introduced into England from France. The great expansion of the Sussex industry in the days of Elizabeth dates from the introduction of this new method, which, involving permanent buildings, more elaborate plant and larger-scale production, put the iron manufacture on a capitalist basis, exploited by substantial merchants and landowners, with the aid of a considerable body of wage-labour. Mr. Straker has interesting sections on wages and costs of production, gathered from the few ironworks accounts that have been fortunately preserved.

From this time on the industry throve on wars and languished in times of peace. When the home Government did not buy its supplies for its own wars, it largely exported cannons and other munitions, often amid loud protests against the danger of helping the foreigner to arm himself. But in truth the industry had no other outlet for its wares; for the production of steel was carried on very little in Sussex, and imported iron was better suited than Sussex iron to many types of finishing production. There were also serious difficulties in the way of transporting semi-finished iron to finishing industries located at a distance.

With the coming of coal and the coal-using furnace, Sussex lost such economic basis as its iron manufacture had retained until then. The industry died out, leaving behind it not much trace that can be observed by the ordinary traveller. The artificial ponds which the ironmasters made to provide their works with water-power are in most cases the only remaining landmarks of the Sussex iron trade. The buildings have gone, and the wood rotted away, while stone and brick have been scattered or applied to other uses. It is true that slag and waste-products of all ages survive here and there, and that charcoal, once buried in the soil, is practically indestructible. By means of such relics the antiquary and the scientist can trace in the fields of to-day the history of the industry; but these convey nothing to the ordinary traveller. Mr. Straker, however, has carefully recorded all such finds; and by means of them he has succeeded in reconstructing the past localisation of the industry to an astonishing extent. What can be done in this way he has done; but the effect of all his labours is to throw into relief the knowledge that is for ever lost.

G. D. H. COLE.

"I BEG Y'R PARDON . . . ."

The Art of Crime. By ARTHUR R. L. GARDNER. Philip Allan. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Gardner's book might with more accuracy have been called *Crime as a Profession*, for he deals exclusively with law-breaking for money, and with the habitual criminal. He has not much interest in ruffians—robbery with violence is only slightly considered, and murder not at all. But he admits a tenderness for knaves. The beggar and the confidence trickster are favourites with him, while blackmailers and pickpockets excite an interest not wholly unmixed with sympathy.

He deals with every branch of robbery and cheating, explaining the methods in vogue, discussing their advantages, and illustrating by numerous examples. The intending criminal will learn a great deal from him, but so, on the other hand, will the intended victim; and the careers which he describes are not, on the whole, calculated to encourage a diffident aspirant. As Lord Hermiston's anecdotes all wound up in the same way—"And what became of him?" "Haangit, mem, haangit"—so Mr. Gardner's almost all conclude alike—"He retired to penal servitude for seven years"—or more or less, according to the circumstances. He does his best to dissipate the gloom thus cast on the beginner's path by pointing out that only crooks who have been caught are available to the historian; inevitably, however, the impression left is that crooks are rather apt to be caught sooner or later, and indeed Mr. Gardner owns that he believes honesty to be the best policy "in the long run."

The most attractive of his criminals are the "traders on pity"; few people, surely, can feel much indignation against these, for after all their branch of the profession is supported by voluntary contributions, and how many of us ever give more to a beggar

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than we can well spare? Mr. Gardner himself has been their victim (in his salad days), and felt no resentment even at the time. He was dining one evening, he tells us, at an open ground-floor window, when a man selling strawberries came up. Mr. Gardner bought no strawberries, but handed over, on request, a pair of shoes. "At precisely the same hour the following evening there appeared at the window, still open, the same importunate tradesman with apparently the same strawberries." The strawberries being again declined—

> He proceeded to inquire whether by any chance I had a superfluous pair of walking shoes.
>
> "Are you, or are you not aware," I remarked coldly, "that at this very hour last evening you made a similar request and that the request was granted?"
>
> His face lit up with a smile and he replied, "One does make these mistakes sometimes. Sorry, guv'nor; no offence meant. 'Ave a strawberry."

Mr. Gardner told him to be more careful.

But many of these crooks—the forgers, burglars and the like—are, on the whole, dull dogs, with more of the stockbroker than the artist about them. Their pursuits are very often as troublesome as a straight job, and no less tedious. One cannot imagine a book like this tempting anyone to join their ranks who was not hopeless from the first.

Mr. Gardner has hardly, from the casual reader's point of view, made the most of his subject: he is too conscientious, too fond of the normal and the general, too blind to the human and dramatic. But there is a great attraction in the subject itself, and in his intimate acquaintance with it, while his sense of humour is engagingly puerile.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Pound Sterling: A History of English Money. By A. E. FEAVEARYEAR. Oxford University Press. 15s.

Any reader who goes to this book hoping for direct enlightenment about the causes and incidents of the present monetary crisis will be disappointed. For Mr. Feavearyear's scholarly history stops at 1928, and to all intents and purposes at 1925. He does, indeed, say that the return to gold, on a basis of pre-war parity, in 1925 has aggravated the subsequent depression; but he does not attempt any further discussion of its effects. We have, then, to regard his work not as a topical contribution to current controversy, but as a scholar's history of the pound sterling from the Middle Ages to 1925. The earlier chapters gather together a good deal of material not otherwise easily accessible. The later largely repeat what has been written before in more than one history of the Bank of England or of British banking. But Mr. Feavearyear seems to have had access in some cases to new sources of information; and his account, even when it is not original, is uniformly clear and lucid. He is especially good in dealing with the monetary controversies of the early nineteenth century; but as he approaches contemporary events his narrative grows more jejune and the reticence of his comments more marked. Certainly his discussion of post-war events is markedly inadequate and inconclusive, though it is occasionally possible to read his opinions between the lines.

All in a Lifetime. By R. D. BLUMENFELD. Benn. 8s. 6d.

Drive, pace, adaptability and a knack of observing detail are what Fleet Street wants, and these Mr. Blumenfeld obviously has. Mediocrity of mind and a complete absence of any philosophy or consistency of outlook are the other natural ingredients of the successful daily journalist, and Mr. Blumenfeld has these too. These selections from his articles during the war are not in any way important, but they are brightly written and will be mildly amusing to people who enjoy recalling our changes of mood in war-time. Some of the personal sketches that follow contain some good stories about Kitchener, Baldwin, Beaverbrook and the rest. None of it is up to much, but not many daily journalists could dig out so much readable stuff from the lumber of the files.

The International Labour Organisation. The First Decade. With a preface by ALBERT THOMAS. Allen and Unwin. 12s. 6d.

Compilations are usually dull; and official publications are apt to be condemned to a reticence which destroys much of their interest. This volume is both a compilation, by members of the I.L.O. staff, and at least semi-official, since it is formally introduced by M. Thomas. It does not escape the consequences of this double handicap; and it will hardly be read through with pleasure. It does, however, embody a thoroughly competent account of the structure and working of the I.L.O. for the first ten years of its life; and there is in it a manifest desire not to push official reticence farther than is quite unavoidable. There is much sensible comment on the difficulties which the I.L.O. has encountered, as well as a clear narrative of events and activities. As a reference work this volume is indispensable; and even as a book it contains a far higher proportion of interest than a casual glance at its shape and contents will be likely to suggest.

Joseph Conrad's Mind and Method. By R. L. MÉGROZ. Faber and Faber. 10s. 6d.

The title, with its somewhat portentous ring, does not do justice to the virtues of this book. It is an introduction to, rather than a full-length portrait of, the novelist, part critical and part biographical, painstaking if, here and there, a trifle sketchy, designed to show the progress of Conrad's talent from *Almayer's Folly* to the novels in which it culminated. Mr. Mégroz includes an interview with the great man, which throws some light on his literary opinions and methods of work.

War and Peace. Vol. II. Translated by LOUISE and AYLMER MAUDE. Oxford University Press. Tolstoy Centenary Edition. 189s. the set of 21 volumes.

The second volume of *War and Peace* in the Centenary Edition calls for little comment. The translation as before is adequate and careful, the notes at the end of the volume are necessary, there are two sketch-maps, one of Borodino and the other of the 1812 campaign, and there is a frontispiece of a misty romantic character depicting troikas racing through woods. It is, in fact, up to the standard of the previous volumes. But we still do not understand why the Oxford University Press should be content with such a complacently second-rate piece of book-production. Though the type is unpleasantly small, three volumes of 550 pages each are still needed for *War and Peace*. At a price of 9s. a volume the workmanship of a standard edition should be better.

BREVITIES ON BOOKS

These notices of new books do not preclude later reviews.

Reminiscences of L. Andreyev. By Maxim Gorki. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Translated by Katherine Mansfield and S. S. Koteliansky, these notes on a man of imagination by a man of critical and observant intelligence have a tart, appetising quality.

My Father, Mark Twain. By Clara Clemens. Harpers. 21s.

Mark Twain as a family man. The author is more her mother's child than her father's; often the very accent in this ingenious record is that of the blameless Livvy.

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Growing-up in New Guinea. By Margaret Mead. Routledge. 12s. 6d.
The process is far less damnable in Camberwell or Brooklyn. This is a comprehensive account of child-life by an American psychologist who lived with her people as one of them—so far as that is possible.

One Hundred and One Ballades. Cobden-Sanderson. 7s. 6d.
A gorgeous book. Few of the ballades are entirely serious; among the contributors are Mr. Belloc, Mr. Squire, Mr. J. B. Morton, Mr. E. C. Bentley, Mr. Michael Pope, Mr. J. S. Phillimore, Mr. Cecil Chesterton and G.K.C. The lovely drawings are by Mr. J. Nash.

The Brave Days. By Neil Munro. Porpoise Press. 7s. 6d.

The Poetry of Neil Munro. Edited by J. Buchan. Blackwood. 5s.
Two books—one of autobiographical essays, one of poems—by the Scotch novelist who was neglected because he lived in his own country.

The Royal Ark. By Mme. Saint-René Taillandier. Arrowsmith. 15s.
A translation of *Le Grand Roi et sa Cour* (a better title) published in Paris last year. It is picturesque historical biography, a trifle ejaculatory for English taste; but the style is not unsuited to the subject.

The Wet Parade By Upton Sinclair. Laurie. 7s. 6d..
Another long tract by an author whose power as a novelist only Upton Sinclair could cripple. He feels strongly about drunkenness, he writes strongly; but he does not think very clearly.

This Crucible. By A Modern Young Man. Davies. 7s. 6d.
A sensational story about a girls' school. If the author is to be believed, some odd entertainments occur at St. Æthelburga's. The book reads like a bad imitation of a bad American novel.

The Ripening Corn. By Colette. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.
An idyll of young love, a *conte* of first lust, this book has beauty, though it is too often spoiled by the author's incurable sophistication. She seems so young one is sorry for her.

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GRAMOPHONE NOTES

AFTER a month or two of suspended animation, H.M.V. have, with their Connoisseur's Catalogue and their October list, deluged the market (and the grateful but unfortunate reviewer) in a manner to which only our present Government lends a parallel. In the course of a short article it is quite impossible to deal with the many new works and fine recordings that are now for the first time displayed in this country (after a long and perhaps unnecessary sojourn abroad), so, leaving on one side those symphonic works that demand more time for digestion and appreciation than I can at present give them, I shall only call attention to the shorter, but no less vital, compositions that are perhaps the pleasantest feature of this catalogue.

The Russian school is well represented, and it is good to find that Liadoff has at last been given his due. The London Symphony Orchestra, under Albert Coates, have made delightful records of two of his most representative works, *Kikimora* and the Eight Russian Folk Songs. It is not too much to say that Liadoff is the greatest *petit-maitre* since Scarlatti. I doubt if his longest work is more than five minutes, yet every page shows a concision of style and a perfection of taste that is found in no other Russian master. *Kikimora* (which will be remembered as the opening scene of *Children's Tales*) is played with admirable spirit and understanding (one 10in., E565). The Eight Russian Folk Songs (picturesquely but inaccurately labelled as *Eight Russian Fairy Tales*) were also drawn on for the same ballet, chiefly as short dances before the curtain. Few composers can arrange a folk song without being over-elaborate or self-consciously simple. Liadoff's arrangements are rich and colourful, full of individuality, but he never introduces an effect which does not seem to grow from the very nature of the theme. As in all his works, the taste and musicianship are on an almost classical level, while the scoring, witty without being grotesque, suggests a modern Haydn more than a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakoff. (I notice, by the way, that neither *Kikimora* nor the Eight Folk Songs are mentioned in Grove, but then nearly all the articles on Russian music in this dictionary are insufficiently documented, misleading, and in many cases quite inaccurate.) It is a pity that one of the best of the folk songs (No. 5, *The Legend of the Birds*) has to be taken at almost double speed in order to get it on to the records (H.M.V. two 12in. records, D1811-12, with the *Tabatière à Mosique* on the fourth side).

Albert Coates's records always have a refreshing vigour and snap about them, but in these recent Russian records the interpretation and, in particular, the choice of *tempi* seem needlessly erratic.

Borodin's *In the Steppes of Central Asia* is a little masterpiece of musical suggestion that conveys a sense of monotony without a hint of boredom. The essence of the work lies in its regular rhythmic beat and in the combination of several diverse elements that have only this rhythmic beat in common. The work is carefully marked by the composer, who has put *Allegretto con moto* at the beginning of the score and has indicated no change of *tempo* at any moment during the piece.

Every conductor, of course, must be allowed some slight deviation from the composer's markings, but I cannot see that there is any justification for adopting three separate *tempi* for this short piece. The whole interpretation is rather a blatant example of musical "living for the moment"; continuity of line and rhythmic proportion are thrown to the winds with a reckless hedonism in order that the beat of the horses hooves should be brought more vividly before us and the oriental song given an added melancholy. This is a disappointing record. (12in., 1885.)

Coates's style is far more suited to Tchaikovsky than to Borodin, and he gives a really excellent performance of *Francesca da Rimini*, a work full of sound and fury which signifies rather more than at first appears. Tchaikovsky's peculiar blend of classicism and hysteria is more suited to the symphonic poem than the symphony, and this and *Romeo and Juliet* are probably his two finest achievements. The L.S.O. excel in this type of work; the playing throughout is brilliant and the brass has that particular clangour that only English players seem to produce, and which I personally find to be far more in the nature of the instrument than the broad, soft tone adopted by German players.

Francesca da Rimini is in the ordinary H.M.V. October list, where it is delicately described as A love scene—in Hades (two 12in., 1929-30).

Of the other Russian records, the most interesting is the

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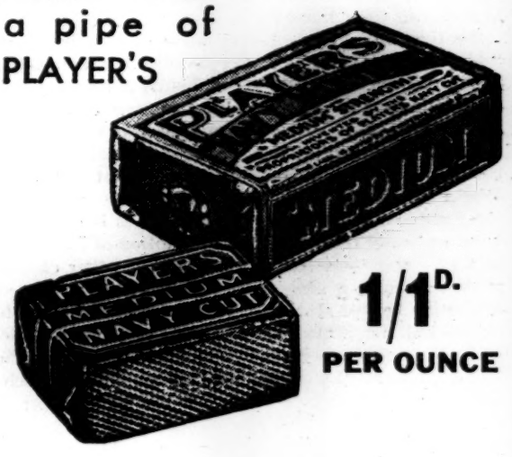

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THE CONTEMPORARY REVIEW.

November, 1931 **3/6**

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The LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR. ***NOVEMBER, 1931.***

NOTES OF THE MONTH: THE MASS STRUGGLE AFTER THE ELECTION. By R. P. D.—THE STRUGGLE AND THE FACTORIES. By J. SHIELDS—LEFT WING SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM, MONEY AND THE I.L.P., By H. P. RATHBONE—MARX AND DARWIN, By E. KOLMAN—MARXISM AND THE NATIONAL PROBLEM, By J. STALIN—THE WORLD OF LABOUR.

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Chinese march from the ballet version of Stravinsky's *Nightingale*. Although essentially a piece of musical juggling, it is more brilliant even than the purple patches from his earlier ballets. The familiar black-note formulæ of the far Eastern cinema scene are here transformed and distorted almost beyond recognition. It is like a page from Sax Rohmer rewritten by James Joyce. As an onslaught on the nervous system it has probably few equals, but the neurasthenic will be consoled by the charming fisherman's song that brings the piece to a close. (It is curious that fishermen in music nearly always have the same type of tone—a gently swaying 3/4 melody that is as unmistakable as the sturdy 4/4 moving bars that prelude any remark by any king in any opera.)

In view of the sudden, though belated, recognition of Sibelius's value as a writer of symphonies, it is interesting to see that two of his symphonic poems are included in the Connoisseur's Catalogue. The records of *En Saga*, played by the New Symphony Orchestra under Eugene Goossens, are a little disappointing. The *tempi* are rather hurried, and there is an irritating cut towards the middle. Perhaps the presence of the all-too-familiar *Valse Triste* on the fourth side accounts for this precipitation. Still, *En Saga* is a work that it is hard to spoil and the records, if not entirely satisfactory, are worth getting. (Two 12in., C1994-95.)

The Swan of Tuonela, a short but very fine work, is played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Stokowski. As in so many of Stokowski's records, the playing and recording are almost too flamboyantly good. Stokowski at times reminds us of that other genius of the New World, D. W. Griffith, inventor of the "close-up." American films are the most brilliant and efficient, even if they lack the subtlety of the best European films, but they are inclined to misjudge the particular quality of European stars. Stokowski's treatment of Sibelius is on a par with Hollywood's treatment of Greta Garbo. It is clear that Sibelius has yet to find his ideal interpreter. But, after all, a currant loaf is better than no bread, and it would be ungrateful to cavil at the occasional excesses in an otherwise admirable performance of this extremely moving work. (One 12in., D1997.)

I believe that Stravinsky once said that good music needed no interpretation. This remark leads one to believe that he is ignorant of the work of Sibelius and Delius (in fact, living in France he is almost bound to be).

Delius, on the whole, has suffered less from his interpreters than Sibelius, and the recordings of two of his shorter works by the New Symphony Orchestra under Geoffrey Toye, if not inspired, are certainly careful and sympathetic.

For some reason the admirable *Summer Night on the River* has never obtained the popularity of its companion-piece, *The First Cuckoo in Spring*. The performance is a little pedestrian, but otherwise good. (One 10in., E544.)

The record of *The Walk to the Paradise Garden*, from *The Village Romeo and Juliet* is definitely better. To those who have never studied the opera, this extract may seem a little shapeless, but actually it is a magnificent symphonic epitome of the emotional situations of the whole opera. The performance and recording are admirable.

There is no space for me to deal in this present article with the many fine classical recordings supplied by the Connoisseur's Catalogue. It is a catalogue which every enthusiast should get and choose from himself.

To turn from the sober richness of this list to the blatant "blurbs" of the H.M.V. October list is something of a shock. This catalogue reads like a collaboration between the advertisement manager of a Middle West cinema and the editor of the Junior Page of one of our presumably adult dailies. The quizzical portrait of a rather Hebraic negro which adorns the cover, though hardly a suitable advertisement for Dvoràk's *New World Symphony* is, at least, less forbidding than a portrait of the composer himself, but the letterpress is frankly inexcusable. I have already referred to the description of *Francesca da Rimini* as a love scene—in Hades. Some of the other captions are even more arch, and a song from *Rosenkavalier* is made even more attractive by the statement that "He flirted with the chambermaid—but she turned out to be his cousin's boy-friend." This style of advertisement is not so much vulgar as short-sighted, and quite unworthy of a firm which has given us such a record of solid achievement.

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particular machine used in this test was selected from stock by the A.C.U. and actually covered over 80 miles in the hour. At the expiry of this test the driver was ordered to cover one lap all out, and he registered a speed of 89.41 miles an hour.

Another 500 c.c. model of the tourist pattern was then sent out to travel at touring speeds for four separate periods of 70 minutes each, on first, second, third, and fourth gears in turn, in order to prove that the cooling is efficient. Standard gear ratios were used, and the machine completed this rather brutal test without a sign of overheating, and the engine was in perfect order at the finish.

The star machine in the firm's catalogue has a vertical four-cylinder engine, which formed the victim in the next test. Seven small boys, each seven years old, were asked to start it from cold, and six of them started it at the first kick. It was then sent out on the track to cover 700 miles in 700 minutes, which it accomplished with ease. And at the end of this ordeal it was dispatched on a single high-speed lap, all out, when it approached a speed of 90 miles an hour. Finally, the touring 500 c.c. model was equipped with a sidecar, and sent off to make seven non-stop ascents and descents of seven famous British test hills—Porlock, Countisbury, Bwlch-y-Groes, Lynton, Beggars' Roost, Altybady and Dinas Mawddwy. All this was accomplished at an average speed of some 24 miles an hour.

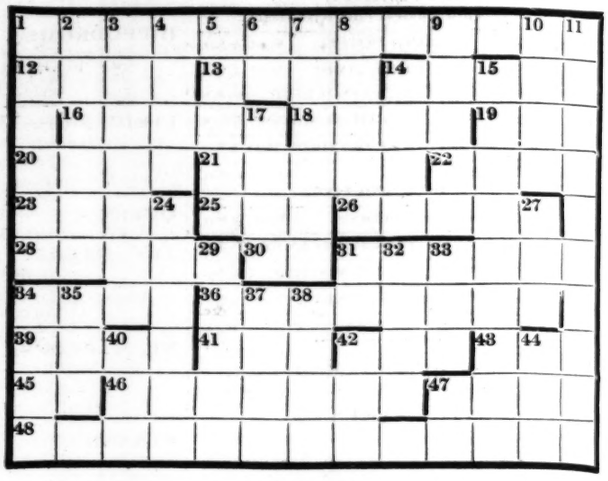
These achievements will inevitably make a great impression on enthusiastic motor cyclists both at home and abroad. The firm already possess a substantial export trade, and their four-cylinder model is extremely popular on the Continent and in the Far East. Glowing appreciations of it have appeared in the Japanese press; and in the recent International trials in the Dolomites various foreign riders selected it as their mount in preference to all the other motor cycles in the world, and performed finely on it. It is much less certain that either these or any other stunts will convert the average middle-aged Briton and transform him into a motor cyclist, assuming that his purse does not cover the costs of car upkeep. He has one fundamental criticism to make on such a superfine machine as the four-cylinder Ariel, namely that it is too heavy. It is fast enough for a Campbell's dreams; it is extremely quiet and comfortable; it steers as well as any motor car; it can be started by a small child. But the average man does not relish the handling of between three and four hundredweight of metal in two-wheeled form. If the machine scaled 100 or 150 lb. there might be another tale to tell. Smaller machines with single-cylinder engines are free from this excessive weight, but provoke criticism of another character. They may suffer from vibration, or be a little difficult to start. All of them, irrespective of size, are cold and unpleasant mounts in bad weather.

The boom in motor scooters, which enlisted many elderly women and retired senior officers after the Armistice, suggested that plenty of impecunious people are ready to experiment with motor cycles which are both light and cheap. That boom was a disastrous blunder on the part of the trade, for the scooters were uncomfortable, slow and dangerous; they inspired a prejudice which dies hard. To-day the trade is producing a far more practicable vehicle in the form of the so-called "Snowden" motor cyclettes, which may weigh as little as 150 lb., are taxed at 15s., and are entirely roadworthy. It is possible that these will gradually attract the middle-aged and especially retired professional people resident in rural areas where public transport hardly exists. But the plain fact is that in a capricious northern climate like our own, no motor bicycle can rank as more than summer transport for perhaps half our young people and all our middle-aged and elderly people; these machines are too exposed to cold and wet to afford pleasant winter transport for the bulk of the population. Poverty makes strange bedfellows, and any further decrease in incomes may drive several thousand people to give up their cars; accustomed to private transport, they may proceed to experiment with motor cycles. But on the average, people who are accustomed to comfort will not easily reconcile themselves to riding unprotected mounts in bad weather. It would be a comparatively simple matter to equip such a machine as the four-cylinder Ariel with weather protectors; it can easily carry legshields of sheet metal, and a windscreen. But it is already sufficiently cumbrous; and any further addition of weight would be prohibitive for any but a young rider. If ever the trade can produce a machine of similar refinement at half the weight, the public would sit up and take notice.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

Playtime

TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



MACBETH

(References to the play are in italics.)

ACROSS

1. *He became this by Sinel's death.*
12. *rev.* Remedy after all.
13. Mohammedan ruler.
14. But not the pupil of Condorcet's eye.
16. Interposition by Mr. Bird.
18. What the stars are learning to do.
19. We shall not see the last of the patriarch.
20. The money is a different story.
21. A mix up for the squire's girl.
22. And also for Marie Antoinette's husband.
23. A drug you need pihe for.
25. Better begin young.
26. This commodity seems to have fallen.
28. Transparent after 42.
30. I seem to have left nothing.
31. Withdraw? or commit one'sself afresh?
34. Perhaps not the humbug he sounds.
36. *Way to the everlasting bonfire.*
39. Noise that includes 41.
41. Suggests both tar and feathers.
42. See 28.
43. Apparently this is not.
45. Highly seasoned dish after 37.
46. *Here were gouts of blood.*
47. Not necessarily offensive.
48. *Title which suggested borrowed plumes.*

DOWN

1. *My lips went into the cauldron.*
2. *The "midnight hags" took their orders from me.*
3. *My pit was appointed by* 2 *as a rendezvous.*
4. I suppose you have 20 of me.
5. The magnate will begin soon.
6. Possessed by "L.-G."
7. *Fever that Duncan slept well after.*
8, 9. *Witch's familiar spirit.*
10. He is almost elephantine.
11. What the Gorgon's head was up against.
14. No saint for Dean Swift's little girl.
15. *rev. Objective of certain trunks in transit.*
17. Richelieu's pawn.
24. Escape by legging it.
27. Miss Macaulay found my plural dangerous.
29. Not in China, but of it.
31. My choice of vessels is limited.
32. In part a Dominion.
33. I wish I had listened to Lady Astor.
34 *rev. My nose went into the cauldron.*
35 *rev.* Browning — with the sting removed.
37. See 45.
38. The top of the conflagration is underneath.
40. Adjustment might begin with this lady.
42. The case is addressed to you.
44. I have been called the crossword-maker's stand-by.
47. My Lord Mayor.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS.—1. antediluvians. 14. lean. 15. aborigine. 16. (g)lass. 17. inorganic. 20. epsilon. 21. aim. 22. ear. 24. goggles. 28. elapse. 31. (*Well of*) *Loneliness.* 33. (th)at. 34. rib(b)and. 37. end *rev.* 38. Ava. 39. it. 40. barometer. 41. ai (three-toed *sloth*). 42. Ealing. 43. ostler. 46. Snell. 47. such. 48. pate.

DOWN.—1. allegories. 2. Neapolitan. 3. tass. 4. ensign. 5. Dail. 6. ib (idem). 7. loon (2 meanings). 8. ur (us). 9. vigil (ant). 10. Magi *rev.* 11. ainé. 12. inn *rev.* 13. secret-aire. 18. Noel (lone). 19. near *rev.* 23. Vasa *rev.* 25. gobble. 26. Lear-n. 27, 44. Sidmouth (Addington). 29. aseelp (asleep). 30. rasp *rev.* 32. (desc)ent. 35. bail. 36. nogs. 37. desc. 41. art. 44. th. 45. ea(st).

BRIDGE

Illustrative Hand No. XXVIII. Passing an Informatory Double for Penalties

North:	*East:*
♠ J 6 ♥ 10 9 4 3 ♦ J 9 8 4 ♣ 9 7 3	♠ Q 10 7 5 3 ♥ Q 7 2 ♦ 10 ♣ A 10 5 2
West:	*South:*
♠ 8 ♥ A K 8 5 ♦ K Q 7 6 3 ♣ K Q 8	♠ A K 9 4 2 ♥ J 6 ♦ A 5 2 ♣ J 6 4

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The Bidding:

South - 1 ♠ West - Double. All pass.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE POUND AND TARIFFS—SWEDEN LEADS—WHEAT AND OIL—"RUBBISH" STOCKS—LANCASHIRE COTTON CORPORATION

IT would be hard luck on the National Government, after the voice of the people had blessed it with unlimited powers to keep the pound sterling safe, if the pound were to slip away to $3. There are, of course, any quantity of excuses for the recent weakness in the exchanges. Sterling had been "bulled" by speculators on the eve of the election, importers had been withholding payment for goods in the hope that the pound would recover, traders had been pushing imports forward in anticipation of tariffs, Americans had recovered from dollar fright and were taking their money home, and so on. There is a modicum of truth in all these suggestions, but the basic fact is that the heavy selling of dollar securities by our investment institutions and the conversion of the proceeds into sterling came to an end some time ago, and that current trade requirements are now beginning to affect the exchanges to a greater extent than capital movements. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that our invisible trading account with the world will be closed this year with an adverse balance of something approaching £100,000,000. The fact that the stimulation of the export trade, following upon the depreciation of sterling, does not swell the actual export returns for some months will probably be seized upon by the National Government as an excuse for clapping on tariffs immediately. But it would surely be more to the point if our Government were to restrict the amount of exchange sold to importers to their normal trade requirements (or, say, 10 per cent. below), an idea which has already been canvassed in the exchange markets. If there is any truth in the "dumping" menace, this would be a practical way of dealing with it.

* * *

What is to be the Government's policy in regard to the exchange? If the price-level in this country were to rise, or if gold prices were to fall while the price-level in this country remained level, the exchange value of the £ should be allowed to fall. And vice versa. I venture to suggest to the National Government that they should forget their election claptrap about maintaining the external value of the £. It would do nothing to restore foreign confidence by talking about stabilisation at the present moment. The example of the Swedish Government is worth considering. The Swedish Government does not talk about stabilising the Swedish crown, but begins the compilation of an elaborate price index, covering both wholesale and retail prices, with the object of regulating the value of money according to the index number. This is putting into practice some of Mr. Keynes's theories of a managed currency. The *Skandinaviska Kreditaktiebolaget*, in its latest bulletin, suggests that if Great Britain made a similar move it would do much to help the world forward to currency reform. The Swedish correspondent of the *Times* even suggests that England has "the ball at her feet again," and should call a currency conference at once. I still maintain that it is not yet time. The gold standard countries must first be taught their lesson.

* * *

The gold prices of commodities are being watched for any sign of an improvement in world trade. Wheat prices have jumped to the accompaniment of a startling report that Russia has oversold, and will have to buy wheat abroad to fulfil its contracts. Last Saturday Chicago wheat touched 66 cents per bushel, an advance in the month of no less than 37 per cent. In view of the poor European harvests it is possible that wheat will hold this advance. Individual commodity prices may, however, pursue for a period an irrational course. Let us take the case of oil. There has been an advance in Texas and Oklahoma crude oil prices. We read that the crowds in Tulsa, Oklahoma, danced and sang in the streets, delirious with delight, when the price of crude oil, which had been as low as 40 cents in the summer, was posted last week at 85 cents per barrel. The man-in-the-Tulsa-street, however, is probably ignorant of the fact that competition between the Royal Dutch, Standard Oil and Russian oil interests in Holland is so severe that the price of petrol has been cut to 6 Dutch cents per litre, the lowest on record. In Germany the price of petrol is three times as high, so that every day streams of German motor cars fill up at the Dutch frontier pump stations, while German aeroplanes swoop down on Dutch territory, fill up with cheap petrol and fly away. Now the advance in American crude oil prices has probably a simple explanation. The invasion of the petrol trade by what are called "bootlegging" distributors has become a serious problem. Rather than exterminate the "bootleggers" by an expensive price-cutting war the big American combines have probably decided to make life impossible for them by keeping retail prices stable, but advancing the wholesale price of the raw material. But a substantial advance in world oil prices, while the restriction of oil output in America is being practically offset by an increase in the production of Russia and Roumania, is obviously not justified. The difficulty in making oil profits in the face of cut-throat retail competition is shown by the passing of the interim dividend by the Shell Transport and Trading. On the potential dividend yield basis all oil shares are still over-valued. It would be fortunate if Shell Transport and Royal Dutch paid 10 per cent. tax free and 10½ per cent. respectively for the year, Burmah Oil 15 per cent. and Anglo-Persian 10 per cent.

* * *

To return to my "rubbish" investment trust. The "heavy" industries in Great Britain provide not a few shares quoted at "rubbish" prices. For example:

	Highest Price, 1929.	Lowest Price, 1931.	Present Price.
(1) Amalgamated Anthracite, £1 Ord.	12/3	1/1½	5/6
(2) Chemical and Metallurgical, 2/- Ord. ..	6/2½	-/0¾	-/5½
(3) Harland and Wolff, £1 6% 1st Pref. ..	16/4½	1/9	3/6
(4) Richard Thomas, £1 6½% Pref.	12/9	2/6	7/6
" " £1 Ord.	4/10½	-/6	2/6

(1) Controls 80% of Welsh anthracite trade with output of over 4,000,000 tons per annum: believed to be efficient but over-capitalised. Preference dividends in arrears since July, 1926. Profits of £447,153 earned in 1930, but bank has first charge to cover advances of £1,632,000.

(2) Owns largest plant for metal ore separation in the country: still over-capitalised at £862,041. Last year plant worked at 50% capacity and earned a small net profit.

(3) Biggest shipbuilders in Great Britain: efficient but over-capitalised. First preference dividends in arrears since December, 1929. Earned over half its preference dividends in 1930.

(4) The leading firm of Welsh steel and tinplate manufacturers. Also owns collieries and brickworks. Reconstruction scheme is awaited. Preference dividends in arrears since April, 1926, but debenture interest is being paid.

The market is hoping that "tariffs" will restore life to some of these dead bones. The foreign railway list also offers a wide selection of stocks at "rubbish" prices. For example:

	Highest Price, 1929.	Lowest Price, 1931.	Present Price.
(1) Anglo-Argentine, 5% Deb. Stk.	75	9½	12½
(2) Leopoldina Railway, Ord. Stk.	26½	11	14
" " 5½% Cum. Pref. Stk...	56½	19	25
(3) Paraguay Central Rly., D Income Deb. Stk.	21	8	9½
(4) Peru Corporation, Ord. Stk.	4¾	1½	3½
" " 5% Non-cum. Pref. ..	23	7½	18½

(1) Owns tramway concession in Buenos Ayres. Past earnings have provided good cover for debenture interest, but exchange difficulties will probably prevent payment due in December.

(2) Railway in Brazil mainly dependent on coffee traffic; badly hit by exchange losses and trade depression. No preference or ordinary dividend paid since June, 1930, but debenture interest has so far been met.

(3) Railway depends on cereal and fruit traffic and has been hit by Argentine exchange. In 1929 D Income Deb. Stock received 5% and in 1930 2½%. Since December, 1930, it has received nothing.

(4) Works the railways in Peru taken over from Government: badly hit by exchange losses and trade depression. Paid and earned 3% on preference stock in 1930, but preference dividend in arrears since December, 1930.

It will be observed that "rubbish" prices are beginning to move upward. It is impossible to say whether this is yet another false start in the security markets, but sentiment is undoubtedly more "bullish."

* * *

For those who do not like to buy speculative industrial equity shares, Lancashire Cotton Corporation six-year 6½ per cent. Mortgage Debenture Stock may have some appeal at the price of 80. This stock was issued at 97½ in March this year under the auspices of the Bankers' Industrial Development Company, which is controlled by the Bank of England. As a financial agency for reconstructing British industries the Bankers' Industrial Development Company has been a failure. One of its weaknesses was its inability to support its own issues in the market—with the result that Lancashire Cotton Corporation Debenture Stock fell to 75½ in spite of the fact that the interest for the first five years is guaranteed by the Sun Insurance. The prospectus stated that when the mills of the Combine were in full production the Corporation would be able to cover the interest on the debenture stock with an ample margin. The depreciation in the pound sterling has, of course, improved the prospects of the Corporation, for Lancashire goods are now driving out Japanese and other foreign goods in the Eastern markets. There is another "bull" point—the Corporation made a large purchase of cotton just before the departure from the gold standard. The subsequent rise in the sterling price of cotton gave the Corporation a profit sufficient to pay the interest on the debenture stock for nearly three years.

COMPANY MEETING

UNITED DAIRIES, LTD.

Great Expansion in Sales.

Development in Research Work.

Presiding at the meeting of United Dairies, Ltd., held on October 30th, Mr. Joseph H. Maggs (Chairman and Managing Director), in the course of his address, said: As regards the trade of the Company, it must be remembered that the year under consideration was one of heavily falling prices, so that a sterling turnover of practically the same amount as last year represents a largely increased volume of sales. The quantity of milk dealt with increased by over three million gallons, butter by nearly 3½ million pounds, and eggs by over fifteen millions, while for the twelve months to October 17th last our sales of English eggs increased by more than thirteen millions.

Rapid progress has been made in the rationalisation of the retail distributing depots. During the year under review seventeen new depots have been built and equipped, three more distributing depots are nearing completion, and four additional ones have been commenced, whilst twenty-one of the old depots have been enlarged and brought up to date.

In regard to the retail shops, eleven new shops have been erected to meet the growing requirements of the outer suburbs, and forty-three of the existing shops have been enlarged and modernised on our standard lines.

In order to handle more effectively and efficiently the milk required for the London market, and the manufacturing side of the industry, considerable progress has been made in enlarging and modernising the numerous creameries and factories in the country. These additions and works have involved the expenditure of over half a million sterling, and were deemed essential to the efficiency of our operations both in distribution and manufacture.

A HINT TO THE COLONIES.

Our Engineering and Utensils Companies (the Dairy Supply Co., Ltd., A. G. Enock and Co., Ltd., and Perfect Dairy Machines, Ltd.) show satisfactory expansion, despite the known depression in the engineering trade generally. Our works at Park Royal have been greatly enlarged during the last year, and now cover upwards of ten acres in area. They are equipped for the manufacture of practically all machinery and utensils required by the modern milk trade. I venture to hope that in future our Colonial friends, on whose dairy products United Dairies spend millions a year, will reciprocate by placing more of their orders for dairy machinery in this country with our Company. (Hear, hear.)

COMPANY'S POLICY TO BUY BRITISH AND SELL BRITISH.

Whatever measure our new Government may find necessary to take to restore the balance of trade should be helpful to the manufacturing side of our business. We have not raised the prices of our branded case goods, Diploma, Regal, Coronet, and Moonraker, and if people would only insist on buying "British" they would find at least equal value and assist the exchange position. (Hear, hear.) I take this opportunity once more to affirm that every drop of milk we sell is produced in this country. (Applause.) Our policy is definitely to buy British and sell British goods.

The burdens directly laid upon us by the new taxes, apart from income tax, are about £10,000 for increased petrol duty and over £5,000 for Employment Insurance. In respect of the latter item, a similar sum has, of course, to be paid by our employees. Whilst the increased allowance for wear and tear is a slight step in the right direction, these allowances are still totally inadequate in these days.

It gives me great pleasure to report a notable development on the scientific and research side of our business. We have set up a Scientific Advisory Committee, and have been successful in enlisting the services of four well-known scientists. A co-ordinated scheme of research dealing with problems of immediate interest to the dairy industry will be initiated, and will be carried out partly in your own laboratories and partly in laboratories connected with certain academic institutions which offer better facilities for certain types of research work than can be provided in your own laboratories. Finally, after the more immediate and pressing needs of the industry have been met, it is hoped to investigate certain fundamental research problems, without which no real progress in the future can be hoped for. Your Directors are confident that this step will result in immediate advantages to the industry, as a whole, and will ultimately be of the greatest service to the public at large.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

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